A Word of Sanctification

For the Urdu Edition, by Hadhrat Moulana Ubaydullaah Khaalid Sahib دامت برکاته (Jaamia Faarooqia Karachi)

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ أَمَّا بَعْدُ

A pious servant of Allaah once asked the people around him, "What is the most difficult task facing people today?" According to their understanding, people gave different responses. Many were however unanimous that the most trying task of the times were earning Halaal income and speaking the truth. The person posing the question however gave the reply himself when he said, "The most difficult task at hand today is bring children up on the lines of Islaam."

It is obvious that children are not items of food and drink that can be protected by storing away in a refrigerator. They are neither items of jewellery that can be safeguarded by locking them away in a vault.

To acquire knowledge and experience, it is imperative for children for children to leave their homes and be exposed to the classroom situation. For their physical well being, they will have to be sent to the fields and gardens and for their social well being, they will have to be in contact with friends and family from the very outset. They will also need friends to ensure their proper mental development. However, these are such needs that are fraught with dangers that threaten the child's character. The danger is that evil and bad behaviour spreads when children interact with other children in the classrooms, playing fields and social gatherings. To make matters worse, children are unable to distinguish between the good and the bad because of their naivety and young age. As a result, there always exists the possibility of the efforts of the parents going to waste.

In the light of the above, the question foremost in people's minds is: "What can we do about it?" The simple but appropriate answer is that together with sincere and persistent du'aas to Allaah, one must present a practical example and way of life and take steps to ensure that children are influenced by good and are protected against evil influences. The apparent workings of Allaah's system is that whenever man does that which is within his capacity, Allaah will take care of all that which man is incapable of doing. This assistance from Allaah is

however directly proportional to the efforts that man applies. The more effort a man exerts and the more sincerity he has, the more assistance he will receive from Allaah.

This publication that our friends at Baytul Ilm have completed is an integral effort in this direction, which is really the responsibility of every Muslim. This responsibility is the effort to correct the lives of people so as to conform with the laws of Allaah and the pure lifestyle of Rasulullaah ρ.

Everyone is aware of the types of books available in the marketplace today. It is extremely rare that one will find any book, either curricular or extra curricular, that purposely includes subject matter aimed at bringing children up correctly. Because of their subject matter and pictures, most of the available books are such that is not worth the while of a concerned Muslim to buy them for his children. As for the others that are available, they seem not to take into consideration the nature and language of children. It appears that publishing them is merely an effort to fill the void in the market.

Some good efforts in Urdu have been made in the near past by authors like Amatullaah Tasneem and Maa'il Khayrabaadi. However, these series have since terminated.

It is indeed commendable to prepare a book focussing on the Deeni upbringing of children without unduly concentrating on language styles and eloquent speech. Our friends at Baytul Ilm have done their best to include stories with excellent morals that are a means of aiding the sound upbringing of children.

An effort has been made to relate the excellent examples portrayed in the stories of Rasulullaah ρ and the Sahabah ψ to the everyday lives of Muslim boys and girls. Importance has also been given to children's interaction with Allaah's other creations. Apart from this, parables from the lives of animals have also been included.

For example, the author draws the child's attention to reality in the story "Shaytaan Vomits" when he asked the question, "Now think well! How does this piece of bread reach us?" Here such contemplation is initiated that is equal to seventy year's of Ibaadah that is done without ostentation and solely for Allaah's pleasure.

Then mentioning the Sunnah of picking up a dropped morsel of food serves to engender in a child the importance of the Sunnah from his childhood. If only just one sentence can be entrentched in the minds of every child reading these books; the fable of "The feat of the Little Rabbit" teaches children that "It is Allaah's favour to us that when we do something to please Allaah, then Allaah will see to all our affairs".

Together with the other benefits of living together, an essential social principle is also highlighted, which is: "Amongst the many facets of living together successfully is not to become angry over minor and insignificant matters".

This humble servant was unable to read every word of this publication, but after looking through selected passages and contemplating over their titles, I am convinced that this work will, Inshaa Allaah, prove extremely beneficial for children.

Our friends at Baytul Ilm have done us a favour by publishing these books for children after already publishing "The Ideal Mother" and "The Ideal Father". It is hoped that other authors will also not forget the children of the Ummah in their efforts and also write works to effect the sound upbringing of children.

May Allaah accept the efforts of all those involved.

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Introduction

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْم أَمَّا بَعْدُ

Various people were asked to define what children are.

A gardener replied: "Children are flowers of varying colours and fragrances that are found in every garden of the world."

A man of learning replied: "Children are like a book, the contents of which cannot be known without reading it."

A tailor replied: "Children are like an unsewn length of material. The more effort is put into its cutting and styling, the more beautiful it will be.”

A doctor replied: "Children are like a medicine that brings peace to the heart and mind and which is necessary for good health."

An artist replies: "Children are a painting. The more colour you add to it, the more beautiful it appears."

A poet says: "Children are a striking blend of love, affection, purity and innocence."

We say: "Children are like soft clay that can be moulded as desired and then slowly baked in the slow oven of truthfulness until it becomes so sturdy that no power in the world can break."

All the above metaphors demand that we truly take to proper upbringing of children to heart. It is with this in mind that we are presenting this fascinating gift to children. You may present it to your children with confidence and delight and may also present it to the children of your friends and relatives. As a teacher, you may present it to your students and as an Imaam of a Masjid, you may present it as a gift to the children of your congregation. Uncles can give the gift to their nieces and nephews and elder brothers and sisters can give them to their younger siblings. In short, these books make an excellent gift for young children.

Your heart may be bursting with many wishes concerning what you would like to see children do and what you would like them to refrain from. Inshaa Allaah, these wishes can be realised through these books because you should find in this collection some subject of encouragement or warning pertaining to the subject close to your heart. Because these books are the fruit of the du'aas and aspirations of many pious people as well as Madrassah and school teachers, it is hoped that they will be especially beneficial in the sound upbringing of children.

The Reasons for Preparing these Books

While every person involved in the preparation of these books will, Inshaa Allaah, be amply rewarded, the actual initiative for preparing it really came from my daughter. After completing the book "The Ideal Teacher", I was at home when she asked, "When are you going to write a book called 'The Ideal Child'?" At the same time, my old friend Mufti Aasim (lecturer at Jaamiah Uloom Islaamiyyah Binori Town) also said to me, "Now after 'The Ideal Mother' and 'The Ideal Father', a book called, 'The Ideal Child' should also be published." Furthermore, after completing a forty day course, I had no idea what book to give the children as a gift. This added to my concern of preparing some books that would benefit the upbringing and nurturing of children and also be interesting for them. Still another person who brought my attention to publishing a work like this was Moulana Azhar Ilyaas (lecturer at Madrassah Arabiyyah Raiwind). He told me that there was no extra curricular book available for children to read in their free time.

With the grace of Allaah, all these reasons initiated the work on these books. It occurred to me that I should present the book as a series of storied because my experience taught me that whenever I related stories to my children, they never failed to remind me every day to repeat the story or to tell them another. This forced me to research more stories. A close friend of mine also told me that when he told the story of the red and white cows (which appears in our textbook called Aasaan Deeniyaat) to his son Hammaad, the boy made him repeat it no less than seven times. The easiest manner of captivating a child's attention, of advising him and of setting right his way of thinking is to relate to them stories with good morals.

With this purpose in mind, stories were gathered from various Arabic and Urdu books. Offering great assistance in this effort with great

sincerity was the respected Moulana Jaawid Sahib (graduate of Jaamiah Uloom Islaamiyyah Binori Town, associate in the publication department and teacher at Madrassah Baytul Ilm Gulshan Iqbal Karachi). Modifying the stories to suit the aptitude of children and stating the lessons derived form every story was Moulana Isa Qaasim Sahib (graduate of Jaamiah Uloom Islaamiyyah Binori Town) as well as brother Haafidh Afzal Sahib. Making the work more interesting and to keep the children's minds active, relevant questions and other subjects were introduced by brother Afdhaal, Molvi Ahmad and Molvi Adnaan (both graduates of Jaamia Faarooqia Karachi). They also included quizes about the Sahabah ψ to acquaint them with the children and added many amusing incidents. Much assistance was also taken from Moulana Moosa Taqi (graduate of Jaamiah Uloom Islaamiyyah Binori Town) and Molvi Sa'd (graduate of Jaamia Faarooqia Karachi), who assisted in the correction and offered valuable advice.

By the grace of Allaah, this book is now in your hands through the efforts and du'aas of many dedicated people. It is hoped that benefit is derived from this humble effort with the same fervour and heartfelt concern that it was prepared with.

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Appeal to Adults

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ أَمَّا بَعْدُ

An Arabic proverb reads:

خير الأشغال تهذيب الأطفال

"The best occupation is bringing up children"

Just as children are a great bounty, they are also a tremendous responsibility. It is the duty of us all to tend to the proper upbringing of children because it is foolish to ignore this duty during their childhood and still expect good from them when they grow up. Whereas an intelligent gardener will securely tie the stem of growing tree so that it grows straight, a negligent gardener will leave it as it is, thinking that he will correct the growth at a later stage. When the tree eventually grows crooked, all his hopes will be of no avail because the time for setting the tree straight has already gone by.

Together with teaching and guidance that the child's teachers offer, the parents, relatives and everyone else whom the child interacts with must also join hands in the effort. The child can only have a complete and sound Islaamic upbringing when all those responsible contribute equally. We must all therefore fulfil our responsibility of overseeing the child's upbringing with due love and affection. Here are a few guidelines in this regard:

1. The entire family must be gathered during a predetermined time of the day in which Islaamic books are read. One may choose various books such as *Fadhaa'ile A'maal* (by Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah رحمه الله), *Fadhaa'ile Sadaqaat*, *Muntakhab Ahadeeth*, all seven parts of *Behisti Zewar*, *Aadaabe Mu'aasharaat*, *One Minute Madrassah* (by Hadhrat Moulana Abraarul Haqq دامت بركاته) and *Islaahi Khutubaat* (by Hadhrat Moulana Taqi Uthmaani دامت بركاته). Spend at least ten minutes reading from these books and then offering an explanation in your own words. The children should also be encouraged to convey what was read to their school friends, relatives and others. You may then ask them the following day about how many people they conveyed the message to. Gifts and other incentives may be given to encourage them to convey the lesson to more people or to learn the Arabic Ahadeeth in the books.

2. Boys must be taught to perform salaah when they are seven and taken to the Masjid to perform salaah with proper etiquette when they are ten. In fact, as soon as the boy is of an understanding age, he may be taken to the Masjid to sit for awhile in the company of angels so that they may be affected by excellent company of the angels. Mothers should let their daughters perform salaah with them when they are seven.

3. Children's tongues should be made accustomed to reciting the du'aas Rasulullaah ρ recited. In this way, pure character and thoughts will be engendered in them. When getting up, they must be reminded to recite the du'aa for getting up, when dressing, they must be reminded to recite the du'aa for dressing, when leaving the house, they must be reminded to recite the du'aa for leaving the house, when going to sleep, they must be reminded to recite the du'aa for sleeping, Like this, they must be reminded to recite the relevant du'aa for every occasion. Just as they are reminded to brush their teeth before sleeping, they should also be encouraged to make wudhu before sleeping, to recite *Aayatul Kursi* and *Surah Mulk*, to apply oil to their heads, *Surma* to their eyes and to sleep as soon as possible after Isha. By keeping all of this in mind, it is strongly hoped that parents will be able to fulfil their responsibility.

4. Parents should take the names of their children and cry as they make du'aa before Allaah. They should make du'aa for their children to be rightly guided, to be saved from calamities, to remain in good health, to be blessed with a good fortune and to be accepted for the service of Allaah's Deen. Parents should also perform two Rakaahs salaah for all they wish for themselves and for their children and also perform two Rakaahs salaah for everything they wish themselves and their children to be saved from. By doing all of this, you will, Inshaa Allaah, see a visible difference in our children within a short time. Rasulullaah ρ mentioned that amongst the people whose du'aas are never rejected is the father[1] who makes du'aa for his children[2]. Parents should therefore ensure that they make a point of making du'aa for their children.

[1] Commentators of the Ahadeeth state that the mother's du'aas for her children are moreso accepted (Mirqaat).
[2] *Mishkaatul Masaabeeh* (Pg.195), reporting from Tirmidhi and Abu Dawood.

For the Children

The following guidelines are being mentioned to teach you how to study this book:

1. Recite *Bismillah* and *Durood* before starting to read and read with the intention of receiving guidance. Make du'aa that Allaah guides you, leads you to the right path and ensure that you are raised properly.

2. Try to write a summary of the story you read in a notebook. This should be in your own words. There are three benefits to this. They are: (a) your writing will improve, (b) you will learn to explain everything you have learnt in the story and (c) you will learn how to make others understand what you have to say.

3. Relate the stories you read to your friends and relatives. When you are sitting with them, tell them to do some good act from the story that they are capable of doing. This also has three benefits: (a) your knowledge will increase, (b) your vocabulary will improve and (c) you will learn how to address people, meaning that you will learn what words to use on which occasions and to which people they are to be addressed.

4. Rather than wasting time at home during the holidays, you can play 'school, school' or 'madrassah, madrassah' and then one of you can play-act the role of a teacher reading out the story to the others. The one acting as the teacher can then ask the others to stand up and explain the story in their own words and to say what they have learnt from the story. When the children are play-acting and any child misbehaves, the one acting as the teacher will reprimand him, thereby giving joy to the parents to think that even in play, their children are teaching good character to others. This is just an example. There are many other ways in which the books can be used fruitfully to learn and teach.

5. Furthermore, dear children. If you have difficulty understanding anything, just mark it and then ask an adult for an explanation. Then, if you feel that you can give us some valuable advice, do feel free to write us a letter under the supervision of an adult.

Adults Already Know What we Still have to See

Dear children! It happens very often that mom or dad will stop you from doing something and even though they explain to you the harms of it, you still feel adamant to go ahead and do just the same. The same happens when your school or Madrassah teacher stops you from something. They may stop you from leaving the school premises during break and then buying from vendors on the street, or they may stop you from going out in the rain or sleet. Although doing these things seem glorious, especially when your friends are doing it, you must remember that doing things of your own accord when going against what adults tell you, is extremely harmful.

Regret will not help at all and apart from hurting their hearts because of your disobedience, you will also be committing a sin and spoiling your name. It is foolish to stand up after already harming yourself and then saying that mom and dad were right. Let us explain this to you in the form of a narrative.

A little fish once saw a worm in the water and was tempted to eat it. As he darted forward, an elderly fish stopped him saying, "That is not food for you, it is a trap." Someone had thrown it in from outside to catch you. If you had to bite on the worm, a hook will pierce your mouth and the man holding it from outside will pull you out of the water. Without water, you will shiver and die. He will then cut you up in pieces, smear spices on you, fry you in boiling oil and then chew on you with his 32 teeth."

"Ha, ha!" little fish laughed as he said, "Dear old man! What hook are you talking about? What's all this about cutting to pieces and spices?! What boiling oil and what man with teeth?! We can see nothing of the sort. What are these fables that you are trying to scare me with?!"

The older fish sighed as he said, "I have explained this to several fish before you. While some understood, others did not. Where are all those today? Why do you not see them here any more? Have you every thought about where they have gone? Those who regarded me to be a sincere advisor have been saved whereas the others left screaming and shouting, but all to no avail."

Little fish refused to believe the older fish and headed for the worm, which was even coated in flour to give it more appeal. The rest is history. He was hooked, reeled in and he saw first hand everything that he was warned about. However, all he could do was to regret.

See children! Those who refuse to listen to their elders always end up harming themselves. Their punishment often comes in this very world and sometimes appears in the form of them never having any peace in their lives. It also happens to many of them that they are always doing things wrong. This is because together with not listening to their elders, they have never sought forgiveness from them.

Dear children! Imaan is another great gift that Allaah has blessed us with. We must remember that everything that Allaah and Rasulullaah ρ have told us is the real truth even though we are unable to see it before us. Whoever listens to and accepts what they say shall be successful and those who refuse to accept Jannah and Jahannam, saying that they cannot see it, such people will be at a great loss. We make du'aa that Allaah grants you the ability to respect your elders and do what they say so that you may never have any regrets.

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Shaytaan Vomits

Hadhrat Umayyah bin Makhshi τ says that a man was busy eating when Rasulullaah ρ came there. The man had started to eat without reciting بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*. He had almost finished eating and had only one last morsel left in his plate when he remembered that before eating he had forgotten to recite بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*. He remembered also that Rasulullaah ρ taught them that when a person forgets to recite Bismillah before eating and then remembers while he is still busy eating, he should recite:

بِسْمِ اللهِ أَوَّلَهُ وَ آخِرَهُ

Bismillaahi Awwalahu wa Aakhirahu

He then recited this du'aa. When he recited it, Rasulullaah ρ looked at him and started to smile. Rasulullaah ρ then said, "Shaytaan was eating with him all the time but when he took Allaah's name an recited بِسْمِ اللهِ أَوَّلَهُ وَ آخِرَهُ *Bismillaahi Awwalahu wa Aakhirahu*, Shaytaan vomited out everything that he had been eating. All that he ate came to an end with that small sentence."

Rasulullaah ρ smiled when he saw all of this happen before his very own eyes. Rasulullaah ρ taught us that when a person forgets to recite Bismillah before eating and then remembers while he is still busy eating, he should recite: بِسْمِ اللهِ أَوَّلَهُ وَ آخِرَهُ *Bismillaahi Awwalahu wa Aakhirahu*. By doing this, Shaytaan no longer has any share in the food and the blessings come back.

Allaah gave us this Food:

The Ahadeeth tell us that we must recite بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem* before we begin eating. If we think about it, when we recite بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*, we get lots of rewards from Allaah and at the same time, we also get to think of Allaah. In fact, the purpose of reciting بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem* is to remind us that it is Allaah Who gave us this food and not my effort and intelligence. I should remember that it is not possible for me to arrange for this food to come to me and to

satisfy my hunger. It is only by the kindness of Allaah that I have this food to eat.

How did this Food Come to me?

Reciting بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem* also makes us think about the morsel of food I am putting in my mouth and swallowing. How many powers in the world had been used to bring this morsel to my mouth? Have we every though about how a single piece of bread reached our mouths?

Which farmer in which land needed to soften and prepare the land for the seed to be planted? For how long did he need to plough the lands with his oxen or tractors? He then needed to plant the seed and water it. The wind then blew over the fields, the sun shed its rays on the ground and Allaah also sent the clouds to rain over it.

It was only then that a frail little stem started to emerge from the seed. The stem was so weak that if a little child has to even place his finger on it, it would break. However, even though it is so weak, it breaks through the hard ground and comes to the top. It then gets leaves and soon becomes a strong plant. After this, the grains grow on the plant and a large number of people get together to cut the plant. Next, many animals or machines are used to separate the grains from the plant. The grains are then crushed to make flour and then brought to the shops for sale. Of all the many towns and stores, it comes to your town and from all the people shopping, it is your father who buys it. When your mother eventually makes the bread and within a few minutes, you have eaten it up.

Now think. Do you have the ability to gather together all the different powers in the world to have that piece of bread to eat? Can you make the rains fall on the fields? Can you make the sun shine on the plants? Can you even make the weak little plant come out of the ground? Dear children! It is only by the power of Allaah that all this happens. It is therefore necessary that we recite بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem* before eating. In fact, we should recite بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem* before doing anything and think that every blessing we have is from Allaah.

Story Two

Only One Door

Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله was the grandson of Hadhrat Umar Farooq τ. He was at the Kabah one day when he met Hishaam bin Abdul Malik, who was the king of the time. Hishaam greeted Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله and then said, "Please tell me if there is anything that you need and I will see that it is done." "O Hishaam," Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله said, "I feel ashamed to ask from anyone else when I am right in front of Allaah's House. Our respect for Allaah does not allow us to stretch our hands before anyone else but Allaah." Hishaam could say nothing and kept silent.

It so happened that Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله left the Haram at that same time that Hishaam did. When Hishaam saw Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله outside, he came close and asked, "You may now tell me how I can be of service to you." However, Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله said, "Tell me what it is I can ask from you? Can I ask for Deen or for something of this world?"

Hishaam knew well that as far as Deen was concerned, Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله was one of the greatest saints of the time. He therefore said, "You may ask me for something of this world." Hadhrat Saalim رحمه الله immediately said, "I have never asked for anything of this world even from Allaah. How can I then ask it from you?!" Hishaam was shocked to learn that there really are people who ask all their needs only from Allaah.

The truth is that people who know how to ask from Allaah will never stretch their hands out before people.

We must also try to be like these pious people and whenever we need anything, we must first perform two Rakaahs salaah and make du'aa. Only then must we go respectfully to our parents and ask them. If it is good for us, they will certainly give it to us. We must also have the habit of using only out own things so that we never have to ask anyone for anything.

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Story Three

The Consequences of Being Hasty

A girl by the name of Maryam had a hen that laid a golden egg every day. Maryam was a poor girl. However, once she started getting the eggs, she and her old mother took them and sold them to a goldsmith. They soon had a heap of money in their house and started to buy good food and good clothing.

One day, when Maryam's mother was out visiting, silly Maryam had an idea. "Why wait for twenty four whole hours to pass before an egg comes," she thought, "I can sooner have a heap of gold if I just slaughter the hen and remove the gold from her stomach." So because of her haste, Maryam did not think and went ahead to slaughter the hen. Now she neither received a heap of gold nor a golden egg every day. She then started to weep and feel sorry for herself and when her mother came back, she could not stop herself from scolding Maryam over an over again.

Note:

See dear children! See what the consequences are of being hasty and foolishly doing what you think is right! Her greed for a heap of gold made her lose the one golden egg she used to receive every day. Similarly, nothing is gained from doing things in haste without the pleasure of your elders. Everything must be done with deep thought, after asking your elders and after making du'aa to Allaah.

Dear children! We must do nothing in haste because we will be harming ourselves. For example, we must never be hasty and suddenly pull our hand out of our father's hand when walking in a park because we may trip over a pipe or something else and hurt ourselves. May Allaah protect us all. Aameen.

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Story Four

Never be Fooled by what you See

A little boy was taking a walk in a park when he saw a colourful wasp. He very much liked the wasp, so he decided to catch it. However, just as he was about to grab the wasp, it took off and flew away. As hard as the boy tried, he could not catch the wasp. All the boy could see was how pretty the wasp was. He did not know about the sting the wasp carried.

The wasp eventually grew tired and hid inside a rose. The boy grabbed the rose with the wasp inside and because the wasp now had no other option, he stung the boy. The boy started to scream and cry. In fact, the sting was so severe that he even fainted. All this happened because he was fooled by what he saw and did not think about the consequences.

This story teaches us not to look only at what we can see, but to look further to what something really is. This is the case with sins. Sins seem very nice on the outside and may be plenty of fun. However, they are very harmful. We should therefore never be fooled by how things look on the outside and we must also save others from doing this.

For example, if you have not learnt your work, you may think that you will get out of trouble by telling a lie. Although this may save you from the little problem of getting punished, you will soon have to add many more lies to the story. This will make Allaah angry and if your parents or teacher find out that you have lied, they will lose trust in you and will never want to believe anything else you say. People will then no longer respect you. You see, although there may be a small amount of benefit in lying, the harms are much more.

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Story Five

A Blind Man and a Crippled Man

There was once a peaceful village where many people lived. In that village there also lived a man who was crippled. Although it was very difficult for him to move about, he never troubled anyone to help him and would do everything by himself. A blind man also lived in the same village. Things were even more difficult for him because he could not see at all. One day, a careless person threw a burning stick in the grass. The grass quickly caught on fire and soon the entire village was burning.

While everyone thought only about themselves and ran as fast as they could. The crippled man was very worried. How would he run away from the fire? He therefore turned to Allaah and made du'aa. Allaah then made him find his way to the blind man who was bumping into things as he tried to run away. The crippled man said to him, "I cannot run and you cannot see. Why do you not carry me on your back so that you may run with me and I may see for you. If we remain by ourselves, we will both be killed." The blind man agreed and the crippled man got on his back. With the directions that the crippled man gave him, the blind man quickly ran out of the burning village and out of danger. By the grace of Allaah, both of them were saved without anyone needing the help of anyone else.

Note:

Look children! When a person has a problem, it is a very great thing for him to make up his mind not to ask from anyone but Allaah. In this story, the men used the intelligence Allaah gave them and used the favours Allaah gave them to help each other. In this way, they were saved from a terrible death. We must also join hands with others in efforts of Deen and assist each other when in difficulty.

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You are Raised with the Friends you Keep

Dear friends! You must be having friends. Many people make friends with others because they are brought up well. Some children make friends with those they play with. Others become friends just because they live in the same area or are related to each other. Do you know what our Deen says is the best reason for becoming a person's friend? The best reason for making a person your friend is that the person has Imaan and fears Allaah. Such people are friends of each other to please Allaah and they always assist each other in doing good deeds.

Can a frog and an ant ever be friends? Now listen to this story.

A frog who lived most of his life under water and an ant living underground became friends. Although they were friends, they had a big problem. The difficulty was that whenever the ant wanted to meet the frog, he had to stand beside the pond and shout for his friend. The frog, being deep underwater, could not hear the ant calling him, so he did not come out. The ant would wait and wait and finally leave without getting to meet his friend. Similarly, when the frog wished to meet the ant, he would stand beside the hole and shout for him. The ant, being deep underground, would be unable to hear the frog calling. So with a frog would call and call and finally leave without getting to meet the ant.

When the two happened to meet each other one day, each one complained to the other about the problem. "This is a strange friendship," they both admitted, "We are just wasting our time waiting for each other to come out." The two then decided to tie a long string from ant's tail to the frog's leg. In this manner, whenever the ant wanted to called for the frog, all he had to do was to pull at his tail. The frog would then come out of the water to meet him. Similarly, whenever the frog wished to meet the ant, he only had to pull his leg and the ant would then come out of the hole to meet him.

The ant was out one day when he saw a piece of bread with some cheese on it. He was busy licking on it when an eagle spotted it as well. As she drew closer, the eagle saw the fresh meat of the ant on top of the cheese. "Ah!" she said, "Here I have two meals in one." She then swooped down and grabbed the ant together with the bread and cheese

and flew away. In the meantime, the frog felt the tug on the string and was so happy to know that his friend wanted to meet him. However, his joy soon turned to surprise when he suddenly found himself pulled up into the air. When the eagle saw the frog coming behind her, she thought, "Wow! Now I have supper as well." The poor frog could do nothing but regret that he ever became the friend of an ant. "Had I not been his friend," the frog thought, "I would never have ended up is a morsel for this eagle, just as he had become".

However, it was now too late. That is why it is commonly said that a person will meet the same end as those with whom he keeps friends. We should now look at our hearts and see who are the people we love. Whose ways and lifestyles do we follow? If the people we love are good people like the Sahabah ψ and Rasulullaah ρ and if we follow their ways of life, we will be with them on the Day of Qiyaamah.

On the other hand, should we choose friends who are evil in nature and follow that which they do, we will end up being raised with them on the Day of Qiyaamah. We should always try to keep good friends because when a bad friend lands into trouble because of his mischief, we will also land into trouble with them.

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Story Seven

The Intelligent Sparrow

Someone once caught a little sparrow in a garden and brought it home. There, he locked it in a little cage. Dear children! You should know that more than any other bird, the sparrow enjoys its freedom the most and is always flying about from here to there. You will see it eating a grain here, flying over there for water, and then finding some food for its little children. It is happiest when gathering little blades of grass for its nest. You can well imagine how difficult it was for this little sparrow to live in a cage.

One day, the man said to his sparrow, "Today I am going out into the garden. If you have any message to give for know your fellow sparrow, I will be glad to pass it on to them." Hearing about his fellow sparrows, the little sparrow started to cry. He thought about his days of freedom when he could fly about with his friends without a care in the world. The sparrow, however, had a message to send. He said, "Tell my friends that they should sometimes think of their fellow sparrow here in the cage." The man was surprised at this request, but when he reached the garden and saw the other sparrows on a tree, he said, "Your fellow sparrow in the cage asks you to think of him."

When they heard this message, one of the sparrows started to shiver. He then closed his eyes and fell dead to the ground. The man was even more surprised now. He thought that the friendship between the sparrows was so great that they could not bear the thought that their friend was locked up in a cage. When he returned home, he narrated that the incident to sparrow, saying, "When they heard your message, your friend was so overcome with sadness that he immediately fell down dead." When the little sparrow heard this, he also started to shiver. He then closed his eyes and fell to the bottom of the cage.

The man was now too was surprised to contain himself. "Oh Allaah!" he cried, "What have I done? I have separated this sparrow from such a close friend who actually died as soon as he heard what had happened to his friend. Now my sparrow has also died." He now realised that it was too late to do anything about it. He therefore decided it to remove the sparrow from the cage.

He then opened the cage, removed the body and threw it behind a wall. As soon as the sparrow fell to the ground, it started to flutter its wings and took off into the air. As it flew by the man it said, "Many thanks to you, my dear brother. The message that my fellow sparrow meant to pass on to me was this method of getting my freedom. As he pretended to die, so did I. He could not have spoken this to you, so he acted it out. I am now a free bird by the command of Allaah. O mankind! Allaah has blessed you with intelligence and he has given us some too. Therefore, stop to think awhile before you lay your hand on us next time."

Dear children! Using your intelligence can get you out of great trouble. Allaah has blessed us with this intelligence and we should use it. The first thing we should do, of course, is to stay away from trouble and not let our negligence land us into it. However, if we do happen to land into some difficulty, we should never lose hope. We should pray to Allaah and think of some way to help ourselves. For example, when preparing for the exams, we should never lose hope when we find it difficult to learn. We should perform salaah, make du'aa and continue trying.

Another lesson we learn from this story is what the free sparrows did to help the one in the cage. They did not leave him by himself. Therefore, we should also do our best to help other people in difficulty. We should assist Allaah's creation when they need our help because this will win us Allaah's happiness. Always be ready to help your friends, brothers or sisters when they have any difficulty, especially with learning their work.

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Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: What is the du'aa to be recited while eating?
Question 2: How do the different types of foods come to us?
Question 3: What was the name of Hadhrat Umar τ's grandson?
Question 4: Who was the friend of the frog?
Question 5: Why was the sparrow not happy to be with the man?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 1: Who was the Sahabi τ whose both parents and children all became Muslims?
Question 2: Which Sahabi τ was the first child to become a Muslim?
Question 3: Which Sahabi τ was the first slave to become a Muslim?
Question 4: Which Sahabiyyah رضي الله عنها was the first lady to become a Muslim?
Question 5: Which Sahabi τ was the first man to become a Muslim?
Question 6: Which Sahabi τ was the first to have a Muslim navy made?
Question 7: Which Sahabi τ was made the judge by the Islaamic government?
Question 8: Which Sahabi τ was the first to be buried in Kufa?
Question 9: Which Sahabi τ was the first man to be martyred?
Question 10: Which Sahabiyyah رضي الله عنها was the first to be martyred?

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The Du'aa for Drinking Milk

"O Allaah! Bless us in this milk and grant us more"

Story Seven

Love for Rasulullaah ρ

When the treaty of Hudaybiyyah was taking place, the Quraysh of Makkah sent Urwa bin Mas'ood Thaqafi to speak for them. Urwa was a very intelligent and observant person. As soon as he came to the Muslim camp, he looked at everything very carefully and even while talking to Rasulullaah ρ, he took notice of how the Sahabah ψ behaved. When he went back to the Quraysh in Makkah, he had the following to say about how the Sahabah ψ would even give their lives for Rasulullaah ρ.

He said, "O my people! I have been sent to the kings of Rome, Persia and Abyssinia. However, I swear by Allaah that I have never seen the companions of any king show as much respect to their king as I have seen the companions of Muhammad ρ show to him. I swear by Allaah that even when he spits, one of them puts out his hand to grab it. When he makes wudhu, they compete with each other to get the water falling off his body and when he gives a command, they run to carry it out. When he speaks, they all become silent and they always look at him with great love and affection."

It is difficult to use better words than these to explain the respect that the Sahabah ψ showed to Rasulullaah ρ. When a person is praised by his enemy, the words carry much more weight. Blessed were those pious saints who managed to soften the hard hearts of their enemies by their excellent behaviour and manners.

One such saint says: "Respect is a crown that is received by Allaah's kindness and mercy. Allaah places it on the head of whoever He wills."

Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ says that whenever the Sahabah ψ needed to see Rasulullaah ρ for something important, they would knock with their nails rather than their knuckles. In this way, they would not be disturbing him with too much noise and he would still be able to hear them.

We must also show great respect to our elders, our parents, teachers and pious people. We must never make a noise in front of them and

never misbehave when they are around. We must listen to all they say and never do anything disrespectful. When returning home, we should not bang at the door, but knock lightly and then close the door gently when coming in. We must listen silently when our parents tell us something and never backchat when they scold us.

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Story Nine

The Words of a Robber

Dear children! You should know very well that Imaam Ghazaali رحمه الله was a famous Saint and scholar of Islaam. Allaah accepted him for many great works of Deen. He stayed in Iran in a place called Toos, but after studying here for a while, he left for Iraq where he could study the higher Islaamic sciences.

He was travelling with a caravan when they reached a deserted spot. Here they were attacked by a band of robbers who robbed them of all their goods. Although Imaam Ghazaali رحمه had no money or valuables with him, the one thing he did value very much was a book in which had written notes from his teacher. This was what made it so valuable to him. When if the robbers took the book away from him, he went up to with their leader of the band and said, "One of your men has taken my book away. All though the book may have no value in your eyes, it is priceless to me because it contains notes that I have taken down from my teacher. I would appreciate it very much if you returned the book to me."

Their leader of the band laughed and said, "A scholar ought to have his knowledge in his heart. What kind of a scholar are you that you have nothing once your book has been taken away from you?" After saying this, he instructed his men to return the book.

This statement of the robber had a great effect on Imaam Ghazaali رحم. He therefore started to memorise all the books he learnt and within a short while he knew them all off by heart.

NOTE:

We should also not confine our knowledge to our books. Rather, we should make an attempt to memorise at least a summary of everything we learn. These things will then be well grounded in our hearts and our minds.

Doing this will cause good thoughts to come to our minds and our hearts will always remember Allaah. We will also not be too dependent on our books. Dear children, just as we memorised nursery rhymes and songs in school, we should also memorise the du'aa for eating, the

du'aa for drinking milk, the du'aa for travelling, etc. We must also try to learn the advices of our parents and teachers so that these become firmly rooted in our hearts. Furthermore, we must always have the strong desire to learn the various du'aas and Kalimahs and continue learning all the time.

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Story Ten

Who Helped?

(A story about Allaah)

One day, an ant happened to be trapped in a block of ice. She called and called for help, but there was none to assist her. She wished that the ice would melt so that she could walk free. In her distress, she called out to the sun saying, "Please do rescue me from this ice. You are so hot that you could melt this ice before the blinking of an eye." The sun replied by saying, "Dear ant! What you say is true. While I am the hottest thing around, there is someone more powerful than me. I cannot assist you without His command. You may however explain your difficulty to the fire. He has also been created by the Creator and may be able to assist you in some way."

The ant then went to the fire and said, "Dear brother! Please use your heat to rescue me. You are very hot and can melt this ice for me." The weak fire however replied, "Dear sister! You are wrong. I am just a weak little thing that cannot burn by itself. I need someone to make me burn and am unable to do so by myself. You will have to take your request to someone else."

Just then, thunder came from a cloud. Looking up to the cloud, the ant said, "Brother cloud! Please help me. It is now for some time that I am trapped in this block of ice and I am starting to feel extremely cold. Please sir! Make so much thunder that this ice will crack and break open, thereby setting me free." The cloud thought for a while and then said, "Sister ant! I am indeed very saddened by your difficulty. However, I am unable to make any thunder by my own choice. I am in the control of someone else."

Just as the ant began to lose hope, she saw that the rain started to fall. She now turned to the rain and said, "Sister rain! Do assist me in my need! As you can see, I am trapped here and am even unable to breath properly. Please allow your waters to rain so hard that they melt the ice and set me free."

The rain replied saying, "Sister ant! I do not have the ability to rain by my own will because I am in the control of someone else. I cannot assist you without His permission."

When she heard this, the ant lost all hope and prepared to breath her last. In her desperate condition, she looked up and saw a massive mountain towering above her. She looked to the mountain, thinking that there may be some way in which the mountain could assist her.

She therefore spoke to the mountain saying, "Dear mountain! You are so large and powerful. Is there any way in which you can rescue me from this ice? If you just strike this ice once, you will be giving me a new life."

The mountain replied by saying, "Dear ant! What power do I have? The most powerful being is the one who created me and gave me my strength. My power is also in His control and I can do nothing without His permission. I have however heard that man is an intelligent creature."

When a man happened to pass by, the ant called out saying, "Dear person! The mountain told me that you are very intelligent. Can you perhaps save me from this ice?"

The man said, "Dear little ant! I am not in control of my intelligence. It is my Rabb who has given me this intelligence. He gives strength to the mountain, heat to the fire, light to the sun and thunder to the clouds. If I save you, will you promise to always ask help from your Rabb?"

The ant replied, "I admit that it was my Rabb who sent you to help me." In a short while, the man had freed the ant from the ice, after which the ant made Sajdah to thank Allaah for sending the person to help him.

NOTE:

Dear children! The lesson we learn from this story is that the only one who can assist us in any situation is Allaah. We must therefore ask only from Allaah whenever we need anything or need any help. This is exactly what we are told in Surah Faatiha when we read:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

"Only You do we worship and only from You do we ask for help"

Therefore, whenever we need something, we should make it a habit to perform two Rakaahs salaah and then ask Allaah with a true heart. When Allaah comes to help us, everything becomes very easy.

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Story Eleven

Thank Allaah

A little boy was extremely thirsty and took water from a well to drink. When his thirst was quenched, he said to the well, “Thanks a million! Your water is cool and sweet.” The well replied, “Do not thank me. Thank the water.” The boy then said to the water, “Thank you very much for quenching my thirst, O water.”

The water replied, “The favour is not mine. The credit goes to the spring in the mountain.” The boy then said to the spring, “Thank you very much for quenching my thirst, O spring.”

“Dear son!” the spring replied, “The favour is not mine. The credit goes to the ice and rain.” The boy then said to the ice and rain, “Thank you very much, O ice and rain.” The ice and rain replied, “The favour is not ours. The credit goes to the sun.” The boy then said to the sun, “Thank you very much, O sun.”

“The favour is not mine,” the sun replied, “The credit goes to the water of the oceans that I draw up.” The boy then said to the ocean, “Thank you very much, O ocean.”

“Don’t thank me, little boy” the ocean replied, “Allaah created me so you should thank Him because he fulfils everyone’s needs.”

The boy then realised that he should thank Allaah, so he put his hat right and humbly said, “O Allaah! Only You deserve to be thanked because only You give all favours.”

We must also than Allaah like this. Dear children! Simply saying “thank you” is not really thanking Allaah. Understand it like this. When Allaah has given us a tongue with which we can speak, we must use this tongue to say that we are grateful to Allaah for this tongue and for not making us dumb. However, when at the same time, we use our tongues to speak filthy words, to swear at others and to sing with music, we are not being grateful at all. We are in fact being fooled by Shaytaan. Being thankful to Allaah means that we should use this tongue to do good, such as teaching people good things, reciting the Qur'aan, making Dhikr and not using it to harm anyone. This is real gratitude.

In the same way, every favour that Allaah gives us must be used in a proper manner. To learn how to do this, we must ask our parents, elders and Ulema. In this way, we will not be using them for doing what is wrong.

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Story Twelve

Obeying your Mother

There was an orphan boy (a boy whose father passed away) who lived amongst the Bani Israa'eel. He asked his mother before doing anything and always did as she told him.

This boy had a beautiful cow, which he looked after very well. An angel one day came to him disguised as a human being an offered to buy the cow from him at a small price. The boy however first went to ask his mother. When she told him not to sell it, he passed the message on to the angel. The angel however offered a higher price and the boy again returned to ask his mother. When she again refused the offer, the angel continued raising the price and the boy kept returning to his mother. When the boy realised that his mother did not want to sell the cow, he told the angel clearly that they would not be selling at any price.

“You are a good boy,” the angel said to him, “because you ask your mother before doing anything. In a few days time, some people will ask to buy your cow, so ask them for a very high price.”

In the meantime, when a man from the Bani Israa'eel was killed, the Bani Israa'eel were ordered to slaughter a special type of cow, which happened to be the cow that the boy had. When they approached the boy to sell them the cow, he asked them for the cow’s weight in gold in exchange. They then paid this amount and took the cow.

Dear children! Our books of Deen tell us that the boy received this because he was obedient to his parents. This teaches us that when we are good to our parents, we may receive the rewards for it in this very world. We must therefore respect our parents from the bottom of our hearts, do everything they say, always be ready to serve them and ensure that we do nothing to hurt them.

Story Thirteen

The Benefit of Living Together

There was a garden behind Na’eem’s house. In the garden was a large tree in which were two nests. One was the nest of a sparrow and the other the nest of a parrot. When the parrot one day saw the sparrow crying very much, he asked, “What is the matter, dear sister? Can I be of any help?”

The sparrow replied, “Someone has taken my children from my nest!” “But who can take them away from here?” the parrot said, “We have been here for so many years and nothing like this has ever happened before.” The parrot then went into her nest, leaving the sparrow heartbroken and even more upset. She then sat and waited while her husband went out to search for the children.

The following day, the sparrow noticed that the parrot was sitting and weeping. She went over to her and asked, “Dear sister! What has happened? Why are you weeping so?” The parrot sighed as she said, “Today someone has taken my children.” “Don’t worry,” the sparrow said, “They must have grown wings and flown away.” She then turned and left for her nest. This made the parrot all the more upset, but she realised that this was exactly how she had behaved with the sparrow the previous day.

Many days passed by after this incident and the two birds eventually laid more eggs and had more children. The sparrow was playing with her children in her nest one day when the parrot came over to her, saying, “Sister! Dear sister!” The sparrow was overjoyed by the visit and said, “Do come on in, dear sister. What made you think of me today?”

The parrot said, “There is a boy living here called Na’eem. It is him who is stealing our children. I am worried because I have seen him looking about here.” The sparrow also became worried and although they thought about living elsewhere, neither of them liked the idea because they had been living there for such a long time. They eventually decided that when one of them went out to look for food, the other would stay behind and look after the nests. When Na’eem saw that one of the birds was always there, he decided to steal the children at night.

He therefore crept up the tree when night fell and put his hand into the parrot's nest. The parrot smelt a human being and woke up, knowing that this could be none other than Na'eem. She then bit his hand very hard and he started to scream. The noise woke the sparrow up and although Na'eem was furious, he could do nothing as the blood poured from his hand. He then got off the tree and went home.

"Why were you screaming last night?" the sparrow asked the next morning. The parrot related the incident to her and they both became depressed and more worried. They neither ate nor drank all day and when night fell, they both started to cry.

A bat who lived on the same tree heard them cry and asked, "Why the tears, my friends? Your time for sleep has come." After the explained the story to the bat, he said, "Do not fear! I shall help you if you are prepared to help me." When they both readily agreed to help him, he said, "That boy troubles me as well. He is always throwing stones at me when I hang upside down to sleep during the daytime." He then showed them the injuries he had on his body and said, "I shall guard you at night and you guard me during the daytime."

The parrot and the sparrow thanked the bat and went peacefully to sleep. That night Na'eem returned with a stick to take revenge from the parrot for biting him. As he crept silently intro the garden, both the sparrow and the parrot heard him. The bat was however watching his every movement and as soon as he climbed the tree, the bat flew at his face and attached himself to Na'eem's nose. Na'eem screamed as loudly as he could but there was no one to help him there. He did not even get a chance to use his stick and had to run off in the dark.

The sparrow and the parrot watched on with amusement and when the bat returned after a while, he informed them that Na'eem's parents had punished him for going out at night. The three birds rejoiced with the knowledge that Na'eem would not be coming back and realised the value of staying together.

Dear children! We must learn from these birds that living together had great benefits to protect a person from difficulties and danger. Another benefit of living together is that children learn from the way their parents live together with each other and learn to do the same when they grow up. We must make up our mind to always be available to

help each other and to assist each other whenever a third person comes in between to cause us some harm, we should be there for each other.

A successful way of making sure that we can live together is by not getting angry and upset for little things. Our hearts should be clean towards each other, we should not complain about each other and never think about taking revenge for anything done to us.

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Story Fourteen

If we Cannot Earn Du'aas, we can at Least Refrain from Earning Curses

Shehzaad and Shakeela were brother and sister and were the naughtiest children in the neighbourhood and people were always complaining about them. When people came to complain and their mother asked them what had happened, the two would say that they are innocent and would make up another story to defend themselves. The mother would then scold the people complaining and send them off, as the two children stood there laughing. Thereafter, the two would tell the mother the truth and when she chased after them to hit them, they would run to their father. The father would then say to the mother, "They are only children and will grow out of it. If children are not naughty, there would be something wrong with them. They are the light and loves of this house."

Shehzaad and Shakeela were however very hardworking in school and always did well in the examinations. It was for this reason that the principal also overlooked the mischief they got up to.

As they were returning from school one day, they saw a boy shooting at birds with his catapult. "Look at that boy!" Shehzaad said to his sister, "He is killing birds with that catapult. Let us go and stop him." Shehzaad then walked up to the boy and said, "Dear brother! Why are you shooting at these poor innocent sparrows? They have done nothing to harm you."

The boy became very angry and looked at them fiercely. "Who are you to stop me?" he growled. "No need to get angry," Shehzaad said to him, "This bird you are shooting at is also a living creature like you and I and the bird is out gathering food for her children. If she does not return home with the food, her children will starve and die. You will then have the sin of all that on your head. It should never happen, but just think that if your father or mother…"

Shehzaad did not get a chance to finish his sentence when the boy angrily said, "Hey! You need not lecture me, do you hear?! My father gave me this catapult for passing. Do you not know how expensive it

is? If I am not going to shoot birds with it, what do you expect me to shoot? Rats?"

"Look dear brother," Shehzaad explained, "This catapult is made to cause harm to others by making them targets. Had you father spent the money on something else, he could have earned rewards. Now with a catapult, you are only earning the curses of innocent birds."

The boy was now very angry and turned the catapult towards the two, saying, "Now we shall see who makes a better target." Shakeela grabbed at Shehzaad's arm and the two ran off home.

When they arrived home, their mother just had to look at Shehzaad's face to know that something had happened. When she asked about it, Shakeela related the story to her, saying, "You know Shehzaad's habit, Mom. A boy was shooting birds with his catapult and because of his habit, Shehzaad had to try to stop him. The boy then became angry and turned the catapult on us…"

"How many times have I told you to mind you own business, Shehzaad?" his mother scolded. "Don't you know that nowadays people think little of hitting you when you are trying to save some bird or animal? It is useless to tell them anything."

"But Mom," Shehzaad explained, "We must also take care of birds and animals because they are living creatures like us. They also have children, mothers and fathers like we have. Think about how much pain their children and parents feel if they have to be hurt or killed. How much pain won't you suffer if someone has to kill us?!"

"You are right, my darling," his mother agreed, "I was just saying that. I am sorry. Now come along and change out of your uniforms because lunch is ready."

Some time thereafter, Shehzaad and Shakeela were busy doing their homework when they suddenly saw some blood spatter on their books. They both got up with a fright and went over to the books. A few seconds later, they saw some feathers also falling. Shehzaad immediately looked to the fan on the ceiling and said, "Something must have hit against the fan."

They then head some sounds from beneath the sofa and when Shehzaad looked underneath, he saw a little sparrow trembling with great pain. He picked it up very gently and told Shakeela to quickly fetch the first aid kit. As she left to fetch it, Shehzaad gave the bird some water from a glass, but the water soon turned red with the blood on its beak.

Shehzaad then tied a bandage on the bird and kept it safely in his room cupboard. When their mother went to their room one morning, she was surprised to see that neither brother nor sister was in their room. Looking out of the window, she saw that they were in the garden, gently trying to get the sparrow to fly. She went down to the garden where Shehzaad explained in a scared tone, “Mum! This sparrow hit against our fan.”

“Yes, Mom,” Shakeela confirmed, “but brother Shehzaad immediately bandaged it and it was healed by the grace of Allaah. We did not tell you because we thought that you may scold us.”

Their mother said, “Not at all! You have done an excellent deed and anyone would congratulate you for it. This is only a sparrow. If we were conscious of each other and helped people like that, all difficulties would be solved.” “How do we get that consciousness?” Shehzaad asked. Mother replied, “We should learn it from the birds and animals. They are always conscious and thinking of each other. You may have seen that when a bird dies, many other birds flock to the body to show their grief over its death. I am very happy that you have made such an effort to save this sparrow.”

“Look Shehzaad!” Shakeela exclaimed, “The sparrow is trying to fly from your hand.” Shehzaad remarked, “Freedom is very great thing to have, but not today. I shall set it free tomorrow.”

Their mother instantly said, “Never delay in a good deed. Never leave for tomorrow what can be done today. Set it free today.” Both brother and sister looked at the bird and it looked lovingly at them, lowering and raising its head several times as if to thank them. They then stroked its head and set it free. The bird flew away and perched on a nearby wall. As Shehzaad tried to grab hold of it, his mother stopped him saying, “Leave it now. It will soon fly away and is only standing there to thank you.”

The two children looked on with tears in their eyes and Shakeela's hand lifted up to wave goodbye.

Dear children! We learn from this that although it was with genuine concern that Shehzaad stopped the boy from harming the birds, he did not realise the fruits of his efforts because the boy did not listen to him. However, because of his sincerity, Allaah gave him the opportunity to fulfil an act of kindness to a bird. Therefore, when a person really wants to do good, Allaah creates the opportunity and the means for it.

One must therefore always have the intention to do as many good deeds as possible. If people can show such kindness to animals and birds, how much more important will it be to be good towards other humans, especially one's brothers, sisters and parents. We should do all we can to make life comfortable for them. The least we can do if we cannot earn their du'aas is not to earn their curses.

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Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: In which city did Imaam Ghazaali رحمه الله live?
Question 2: From who should we ask help in every difficulty?
Question 3: What price did the boy from the Bani Israa'eel ask for his cow?
Question 4: Which animal helped the sparrow and the parrot?
Question 5: Who did the Quraysh of Makkah send to speak to the Muslims at Hudaybiyyah?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 11: Who was the Sahabi τ who was the first to be buried in the Jannatul Baqi graveyard in Madinah?
Question 12: Who was the Sahabi τ who was first to be named Muhammad after Rasulullaah ρ?
Question 13: Who was the Sahabi τ who was the first to shoot an arrow in Islaam and because of whom three Mushrikeen died during the Battle of Uhud?
Question 14: Who was the first to build a prison in Islaam?
Question 15: Who was the Sahabi τ from the Muhaajireen to be born first in Madinah?
Question 16: Who was the Sahabi τ from the Ansaar to be born first after the Hijrah?
Question 17: Who was the Sahabi τ whom Rasulullaah ρ first sent as a teacher to the people of Madinah?
Question 18: Who was the Sahabi τ who was the first to build a Masjid in Islaam?
Question 19: Who was the Sahabi τ who was the first martyr in the Battle of Badr?
Question 20: Who were the first two Sahabah ψ from the Ansaar to accept Islaam?

Whose Business?

Someone asked Chahca Jakan: “I hear that you neighbour has made some execellent Kheer.”
”What has that got to do with me?” Chahca Jakan replied.
“I hear that he has sent some to you,” The person said.
“What has that got to do with you?” Chahca Jakan retorted.

Quick Thinking

Servant: Madam! Madam! A mouse has fallen into the pot of boiling milk!
Madam: O dear! O dear! What did you do?
Servant: I threw the cat in after it.

Story Fifteen

The Sin of Staying Absent for a Single Day

Shaytaan is an open enemy of mankind who tries his best to spoil a person's life in the Aakhirah. Our Nabi ρ has however taught us very well how to save ourselves from the traps of Shaytaan. Our saints have related an interesting story in this regard, which we will tell to you in simple words.

Shaytaan was busy taking daily reports from all his helpers, when some of them told him how they managed to get people to drink liquor, to steal, to gamble and to commit many sins. One helper was very quite and said nothing. Shaytaan then turned to him and said, "And what did you manage to do today?"

The helper said, "I feel shy to tell you the little I did when compared to what the others have done." "Just go ahead and tell us anyway," Shaytaan said. "Well," he said, "today I made a little boy stay absent from Madrassah."

Shaytaan stood up from his pace and hugged the helper saying, "The act that you think is little is actually much better than all the acts that the others have done because when the boy tastes the pleasure of staying absent, he will continue doing it and will start developing bad habits because he will not learn what is right in Madrassah. Because of his lack of knowledge, he will then start to commit sins without you ever having to tell him to. You have therefore done a very good thing."

NOTE: Look how happy Shaytaan became because a child with interest in Madrassah was stopped from gaining knowledge. Remember that whatever makes Shaytaan happy will make Allaah angry. Another harm of this is that such behaviour will hurt the hearts of the child's parents and teacher, which will be even worse if they every happen to stop making du'aa for the child because of this.

A child will be able to learn well when the parents and teachers are pleased with him and he will be able to remember all his work. When we are present throughout the year, we may receive a gift from the school or Madrassah at the end of the year and perhaps even

something from our parents. By seeing us, our friends and little brothers and sisters will also be encouraged to attend regularly without staying absent at all. The school or Madrassah will also get a good name if this becomes common with more and more students.

We should all therefore make a firm intention never to miss classes by being fooled by Shaytaan and his helpers. We must also make the following du'aa to be saved from this:

اَللَّهُمَّ اِنِّي أَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ اِبْلِيْسَ وَ جُنُوْدِهِ

"O Allaah! I ask you for protection from Iblees and his army"

Story Sixteen

Love for the Sake of Allaah and Dislike for the Sake of Allaah

Hadhrat Umar τ once entered the Masjid and noticed that a downpipe from Hadhrat Abbaas τ's gutter was located in the property of the Masjid, because of which the water from his roof would flow into the Masjid property. Hadhrat Umar τ reasoned that since this downpipe was benefiting a single person, it was against the respect of the Masjid to have it there. He therefore gave the instruction for the pipe to be removed. Although he gave the instruction in anger, he gave it because his anger was for Allaah.

When Hadhrat Abbaas τ found out about this, he approached Hadhrat Umar τ and asked why the pipe was taken down. Hadhrat Umar τ explained to him that the Masjid was not private property and it was therefore mot permissible for any person to use the property for his own benefit.

"Do you know how that pipe came to be there?" Hadhrat Abbaas τ asked, "It was there from the time of Rasulullaah ρ and Rasulullaah ρ himself gave permission for it to be placed there. Who are you to have it removed?"

"Did Rasulullaah ρ really give permission for it to be placed there?" Hadhrat Umar τ asked. "He certainly did," Hadhrat Abbaas τ replied. "Come with me then," Hadhrat Umar τ said to Hadhrat Abbaas τ. They then went to the place where the pipe was and Hadhrat Umar τ bent down in a bowing position. "Now get on to my back and replace the pipe," Hadhrat Umar τ said. "I will rather get someone else to do it," Hadhrat Abbaas τ said.

Hadhrat Umar τ however said, "Who was I to take down something that Rasulullaah ρ allowed to be put up? Because I have committed such a serious wrong, the least punishment I can suffer is for you to stand on my back and replace the pipe." Hadhrat Abbaas τ then did as Hadhrat Umar τ had instructed and the pipe has remained where it is until this day. Mat Allaah reward those who have built the Masjid for leaving the pipe where it had been even though it is no longer needed there. This

they have done as a reminder and to practise upon the Hadith of Rasulullaah ρ.

Rasulullaah ρ said, "Whoever loves for the sake for Allaah and dislikes for the sake of Allaah has perfected his Imaan."[1] Therefore, when a person does this, it tells us that his Imaan is very strong.

Dear children! This incident teaches us that whenever we see someone good in any relative or anyone else in school or Madrassah and we wish to be friends with the person, we must ensure that we are doing so only for the pleasure of Allaah. Similarly, when we become angry or dislike something, we should do this also for the sake of Allaah only. We must therefore check the reasons for which we like or dislike something. Remember that whenever we get angry with someone, it must be only when he breaks a command of Allaah.

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[1] *Islaahi Khutubaat* Vol.9

Story Seventeen

The Consequences of Greed

There was a large pond in which there lived many fish. There was also a crab living in this pond. All the fish respected the crab very much and would always ask him for advice before doing anything. It so happened once that because of the intense heat and no rain, the pond was starting to dry up. The fish were very worried and decided to see the crab for a solution, the crab was however just as worried as them and could offer no solution.

A crane then came flying by and spoke to the crab saying, "I have heard that some fishermen are coming here tomorrow with a net to catch all the fish." This made the crab even more worried and when he informed the fish about it, they all started to cry. Seeing them cry, the crane said, "No need to cry. There is a lake nearby here and if you want, I could take all of you there one-by-one.

The fish agreed to the idea and the crane started to take them all in turn. However, instead of taking them to a lake, he took them to a quiet spot and ate them all. When he eventually came for the crab, the crab had already understood what he had done. The crab therefore grabbed hold of the crane's beak and as hard as he tried, the crane could not break free. He finally died like that.

LESSON: The consequences of greed and deceiving others lead to a situation like the crane found himself in. Greedy and cunning people always find themselves in trouble. We must therefore be thankful to Allaah for whatever He gives us and never look at what others have. When someone is greedy for what others have, he soon involves himself in deception or some other evil to get what he wants. For example, when some elder is giving out sweets or chocolate, we must never hide ours away and collect more or lie to them saying that we did not receive any.

Dear children! Doing such things is very wrong and although it seems small, it is a very serious sin in the sight of Allaah. Another evil of this is that it leads to more lies and deceiving, which eventually becomes a habit which one cannot stop. May Allaah save us all from this. Aameen.

Story Eighteen

Good in Return for Bad

The bear was famous in the forest for his good character and helpfulness. All the animals loved and respected him and even the lion king had a lot of respect for him. Because he was always helping others and was so good to them, he had no enemies in the forest except for the fox and one-eyed jackal who hated him for no reason at all. They therefore did their best to harm him and to make him look a fool, but none of their plans worked.

Apart from the trouble they gave the good bear, the fox and his friend the jackal also gave grief to the other animals of the forest. They were always knocking nests off trees, destroying the homes of other animals, making fools of others and causing other animals to fight with each other.

The fox one day happened to see some hunters digging a large hole in the ground to trap an elephant. After digging the hole, they covered it with grass, branches and leaves so that animal may fall inside. A devilish plan suddenly flashed through the fox's mind. This, he thought, was the perfect way to get rid of the good bear.

When he related the plan to his friend, the jackal was very impressed and praised his friend for coming up with such a cunning idea, saying, "What a marvellous idea for finally getting rid of the bear. He will now get his punishment for being so good to everyone."

The fox the explained, "Because mister goody bear likes to help others so much, I shall go to him at eight o' clock tonight and tell him that you have been seriously hurt and need his help. I shall then lead him to the area where the trap is dug and there he will fall inside and never worry us again. But first, I must show you where the place is."

They then went off into the forest but had not even come close to the place when they both fell into a deep hole. "Ouch! My leg! My leg!" the jackal cried out, "I think I broke my leg!" "O dear! O dear!" the fox shouted, "My head! I must have cracked it."

“What have you done?” the jackal asked. How did we fall into the trap?” when he realised what had happened, the fox said, “This is not the trap I saw. The hunters must have dug another trap. We will die here!” The two of them desperately called to the other animals for help, but none wished to help them. The other animals were only too happy to be rid of them.

When the news reached the bear, he immediately went over to help them, but the other animals stopped him and reminded him about the evils that the fox and his one-eyed friend had carried out in the past. The bear however did not change his mind and said to them, “Evil is not rewarded with evil but with good. We must help them.”

The animals then helped the bear rescue the two. The fox and the jackal were then eternally grateful to the bear and promised never to harm anyone ever again.

LESSON: One must never stop doing good because this is what will even make friends out of enemies. When we behave kindly towards people who are bad to us, this good will spread to them as well. When someone in school or at home is always complaining about us and blaming us for things we never did, we must not wait for revenge, but should be good to them. They will soon become embarrassed by the way they act and will start treating us well.

Story Nineteen

“Your son has Come Second in the Board Exam”

This is a true story about a boy who passed Matric with excellent results. However, his parents were very old and his father was very ill and unable to work. Therefore, although the boy wanted to study further, his father explained to him that he should rather start a business so that he could support them. His father then used three thousand Rupees to start a grocery store for him. This boy who had come first in Matric was now forced to be a shopkeeper.

He was however not discouraged. Because he had the desire to study further, he bought some books to complete an FSc degree and started his studies. He used all his free time to study and whenever a customer walked in, he served the customer and then immediately went back to his studies. He studies physics, chemistry and math by himself and whenever he experienced any difficulty, he got help from a professor at a nearby college. In fact, he explained his situation to the professor and asked him to teach him the practicals of the subjects. The professor was kind enough to agree.

Therefore, whenever he needed to complete the practical work with the professor, he would tell his father that he needed to go into the town to buy goods for the shop. He would then go to a pious and honest man and give him a list of the goods he needed. While the man got everything ready for him, he would go off to the professor and complete the work he had. After completing, he would pass by and collect the goods to take back. In this way, he finally managed to complete his studies together with the practical course.

Eventually, when the exams started, he used the same excuse of buying goods to attend the exams and with the help of Allaah, he managed to come second in the Lahore Board exams.

As the news came in the newspapers, people started to congratulate his father, saying, “Your son has come second in the Board Exam.” “But my son is not studying,” the father assured the people. It was only after awhile that they convinced the father that it really was his son. The people then got together and, after speaking to some affluent people, managed to arrange a scholarship for the boy. With this

scholarship, the boy was able to continue studying, while money was also available to provide for the needs of his parents.

The boy then enrolled in a university where he studied civil engineering and passed successfully. He now has an important post, had been given a car and a house. His parents also live happily with him.

When a person had a firm intention to accomplish something and does not give up hope, Allaah makes it possible for him.

NOTE: Look dear children! We must also never lose hope and make an effort to learn something that is permissible and good for us. When doing so, we must also make many good intentions so as to be rewarded for it.

Remember also that the same Allaah Who feeds thousands of large elephants on land and thousands of gigantic whales in the oceans does not need a one-and-a-half metre tall human to earn a degree before feeding him. Allaah sustains people through His power. It is for us to make sure that we obey Allaah's commands in whatever occupation we are in, to obey and be good to our parents and other people, to stay away from asking from people and to spend the wealth we earn in good courses.

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Story Twenty

The Feat of the Little Rabbit

It was a freezing winter's day when Little Rabbit looked out of his burrow. It has been snowing for three days and was still snowing. He was however very hungry because he could not get out of the burrow the previous few days to find something to eat. Today, however, he had no option but to venture out into the cold and look for something. He therefore took a deep breath and stepped out.

It was after a long search that he finally found two turnips. He was so happy to have them and immediately ate one up where he stood. He was just about to eat the second one when he suddenly remembered his friend the sheep. "He must be starving by now," Little Rabbit thought, "perhaps I should keep this one for him." He then picked up the turnip and took it straight to the Little Sheep.

When he reached Little Sheep's house, he did not find him there and thought to himself, "He must have been unable to bear the hunger any longer and also went out to find some food. Anyway, I shall leave this turnip on his table so that he can have it when he returns." He then left the turnip there and left.

Now listen to Little Sheep's story. Little Sheep was starving and went out in search of food. He was lucky enough to find a tasty cabbage somewhere and took it home to eat it under his warm blanket. When he reached home however, he was surprised to find a turnip on his table. "Who could have put this there?" he thought. He then sat and looked at the turnip as he ate his cabbage, trying very hard to figure out who it was.

He was unable to think who it could be, but after eating the cabbage, he was too full to eat the turnip. He therefore decided to give it to the Little Deer, thinking that Little Deer must have also not eaten for several days. He then left home despite the cold and finally reached Little Deer's house. To his disappointment, Little Deer was not home.

"He must have gone looking for food," Little Sheep thought, "where will he find any in all this snow and ice? I will leave the turnip here so that

he can have something to eat when he returns all tired and hungry." He therefore left the turnip there on Little Deer's chair.

As Little Sheep reached Little Deer's house, Little Deer was busy looking for food in the forest, but not much grew on the icy ground. He was however very pleased to spot a bunch of spinach leaves just as he was growing tired and quickly picked them up and took them home.

When he reached home however, he was surprised to find a large turnip on his chair. "Who could have put this there?" he thought. He then sat and looked at the turnip as he ate one spinach leaf after another. His belly was filled very quickly and the turnip still lay there uneaten.

He knew that Little Rabbit loved turnips and thought to himself, "It has been snowing for two days non-stop and poor Little Rabbit must have been unable to come out of his burrow. The poor boy must be starving. I hope that he had not already died of hunger." He then left for Little Rabbit's house.

When he got there, he found Little Rabbit fast asleep. Because he had eaten well and was happy, Little Rabbit was enjoying his sleep. "Poor boy must have fallen asleep to forget about his hunger," Little Deer thought. "I shall just leave it here on his chair so that he may eat it when he wakes up." Saying this, he left the turnip behind and went home.

Little Rabbit was hungry by the time he woke up and dreaded going out into the cold again to look for food. Since he had no option, he made himself brave and got out of the warm bed. He was just about to go outside when his eyes fell on the turnip. "Wow!" he exclaimed, "Someone must have though about how hungry I will be and left this here just as how I had done." He then eagerly ate the turnip up and was again full and happy.

Dear children! Look how people think of you when you think of them. Little Rabbit thought of others and they in turn thought of others, because of which Little Rabbit himself benefited at the end of the day. Similarly, when we think of others and do things for our parents, brothers and sisters, they will also think of us and do things for us. For example, when you do something your mother tells you to do and she becomes happy with you, she will perhaps get your elder brother to fix

your school bag or get you another one altogether. Besides what we can get from them, when we do it to please Allaah, Allaah will also make sure that we are seen to and our elders will always be making du’aa for us.

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Story Twenty-One

The Intelligent Hare

A cruel lion once arrived in a jungle and told the animals that each day one of them should present himself to the lion to be eaten. “If any of you arrives late,” the lion roared, “I shall eat all of you.” A week passed and one-by-one, several animals gave their lives for the safety of the others.

There was however a very intelligent hare that made du’aa to Allaah to save them from the lion. He then called all the animals together and told them that he had a plan to get rid of the lion. Since the following day was his turn to go to the lion, he decided to put his plan into action.

The lion waited for the hare to arrive at the fixed time but the hare purposely delayed. He watched from a distance as the lion started to pace up and down in anger. The hare then went forward and said. “Please do not be angry with me but listen to my story. I was in my way to you when another huge lion stopped me and told me that he would eat me up. When I told him that I was coming to you, he became very angry and told me that he wanted to meet you to see whether you or him would rule the jungle. He is now waiting for you.

“What!” the lion shouted, “Show me where he is and I will finish him off.” The hare then led the lion to a deep well and said to him, “There he is, shaking and swaying inside that well.” The lion looked inside and saw his reflection in the water as a shaking and swaying lion. He immediately decided to pounce on the lion and ended up with a great splash deep in the well. There he died. All the other animals then came out to thank the hare for his marvellous plan.

NOTE: See dear children! The lion was cruel and eventually died as a result of his cruelty. Whereas he thought that he was in control, Allaah had decided that he should be destroyed and disgraced. We must also make the intention never to be unjust towards people when we grow up and even when we are young, we must never threaten our little brothers and sisters so that they allow us to have more sweets, ice cream or chocolate when our parents give us any. We must also never take things away from them because this will make Allaah angry, will make our parents angry and will cause us to be embarrassed in later

life. In this way, we will not only lose what we take away from others, but will even lose that which is ours.

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Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: List the benefits of not staying absent and the harms of staying absent, as mentioned in the story.
Question 2: What was the name of Rasulullaah ρ's uncle?
Question 3: What was the crane's punishment for his greed?
Question 4: Who was the fox's friend with whom he planned against the good bear?
Question 5: Why was Little Rabbit feeling hard to leave the burrow?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 21: Who was the first horseman in Islaam?
Question 22: Who was the husband and wife from amongst the Sahabah ψ who first made Hijrah?
Question 23: Who was the first Sahabi τ to greet Rasulullaah ρ with the words "*As Salaamu Alaykum*"?
Question 24: Who was the first Sahabi τ to light a lantern in the Masjid?
Question 25: Who was the first Sahabi τ from Rome to accept Islaam?
Question 26: Who was the first of Rasulullaah ρ's wives to pass away after him?
Question 27: Who was the first Sahabi τ to call out the Adhaan in the Kabah?
Question 28: Who was the first Sahabi τ to become Haafidh of the Qur'aan?
Question 29: To which two wives of Rasulullaah ρ did Allaah send Salaams?
Question 30: What was Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ's real name?

The Duaa for Looking into the Mirro'r

اللَّهُمّ كَما حَسَّنْتَ خَلْقي فَحَسِّنْ خُلُقيَ

O Allaah! It is you who has beautified my physical appearance, so do beautify my character as well.

Story Twenty-Two

The Advice of the Boj Bajkar

A man once climbed up a very tall date palm for some reason and could not get down again. When he screamed to the people for help, no one had any idea about how to get him down. Eventually one foolish person suggested that the call for Boj Bajkar (another fool who appeared to be very intelligent).

When they called for Boj Bajkar and he arrived, he threw a rope to the man and told him to tie it around his waist. The man did as told and Boj Bajkar told the people to stand clear of the tree. When they moved away, Boj Bajkar pulled hard at the rope and the man came crashing down. Although his broken body came down, his soul had already left for the next world.

“What have you done?!” the people shouted. “But, I don’t understand” Boj Bajkar told them, “I have rescued so many people from wells in this manner and they are all fine.” “You fool!” they all screamed, “The manner of rescuing a person from a tree is different from the manner of rescuing a person from a well. You have treated a person on a tree like one in a well and now look what you have done?” They then scolded him severely and threw him out of the town.

Dear children! In the light of this story, our elders wish to teach us that sometimes disobedient people do certain things to become high in this world. Now, when people of Imaan who are very high in the sight of Allaah, use the same methods of the others to become high, they will be actually lowering and destroying themselves. We must therefore dress, eat, live, look like and do everything like the higher people (Rasulullaah ρ, the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام and the Sahabah ψ). Otherwise, we will be destroying ourselves. May Allaah grant us the proper understanding. Aameen.

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Story Twenty-Three

Pride Falls

Two little frogs lived in a pond with their mother. Because they knew no place other than the pond, their mother would not allow them to go anywhere else. They were however getting tired of being in the same place and would always ask her to allow them out.

One day, they got out of the water and saw their opportunity to leave. The crept away silently and after hopping for a long while, they came to the end of the forest. There they saw a field and a farm. On the field they saw a large bull standing.

“Wow!” they both exclaimed, “What a large animal! It is even bigger than mother. That must surely be the largest animal in the world.” They stood there in amazement and then went to have a closer look. As they stood there, the bull snorted so powerfully that the two were swept away and fell down some distance away. “We must tell mother about this,” they said as they hopped off home.

They eventually found their way back to the pond where their mother was looking for them. “Where have you two been?” she asked, “I was so worried about you.”

“Mother! Mother!” they both shouted, “Today we have seen the largest animal in the world. It is even larger than you.” “Nonsense,” their mother said, “I am the largest of all creation.”

No, mother,” they said, “He is much larger than you and he snorted so hard that we were thrown into the air.”

Their mother did not believe them because she saw herself as the largest animal alive. “Maybe I should blow myself up a little to convince them,” she thought to herself. She then started to blow up her lungs and grew very big. With much difficulty, she managed to ask, “See how big I am now. Is that animal as big?”

“You are still nothing, Mother,” they said, “He is still much bigger.” As big as she tried to blow herself up, she could never be as large as the bull, but she still tried and tried. Eventually, she pushed herself over

the limit and exploded. When it happened, the two little frogs had closed their eyes out of fear, but when they opened their eyes again, their mother was nowhere to be seen. There were only bits of her lying about. She was foolish enough to try to be what she was not and killed herself.

Dear children! She was ungrateful for how Allaah had created her and could not accept that Allaah had also created animals larger than herself. We learn from this that we should be content with what we have and never have greed for what others have. By burning our hearts for what clothing, wealth, looks and other things people have, we will only be depressing ourselves and not achieving anything. We will be then showing ingratitude for what we have and because of this, we will even lose all that we do have.

Rather than trying to be as large as the bull, the mother frog should have explained to her children that Allaah has created everything differently for reasons He Alone knows. Instead of wishing to be anything else, every creation must look at the bounties Allaah has given them. While a frog can hop about and swim, a bull cannot do so that easily. By telling them things like this, her children would them not look at others with jealousy and will therefore not be ungrateful to Allaah.

Therefore, dear children, we must always never look down at the things we receive, but be happy about them and be grateful. The second thing to remember is never to boast about them because we receive nothing by our own doing. Everything is from Allaah.

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Story Twenty-Four

Save Yourself from Lying

Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jaylaani رحمه الله was a great saint. When he was leaving home to study, his mother sewed forty Dinaars (gold coins) in her son's shirt below the arm to conceal them from the robbers and thieves. While sending him off, the pious mother advised him saying, “Never speak a lie.” The caravan had not gone very far when robbers attacked them on the way and looted their belongings. While looting the caravan, a robber came to the young boy and enquired, “Have you got any money with you?" Because his mother told him never to lie, he said, "Yes, I have forty Dinaars with me", replied the boy. The robber could not believe that a boy in such a poor condition would have so much money with him. He took it as a joke and did not care to search him. Every robber who met him and asked him about the money got the same simple reply, "Yes, I have forty Dinaars with me."

At last, the ring leader of the robbers put the same question to the boy. He also got the same reply from the boy. "Where is the money?" he asked. "It is tucked in my shirt below the arm," came the reply. When the chief decided to check up on the boy, he was amazed to find forty gold coins sewn in the sleeve under the arm.

He was greatly amazed by the truthfulness of the boy and asked, "Why, boy, did you disclose the money which was so safely hidden in your shirt ?" The boy calmly replied, "While seeing me off, my mother had told me never to tell a lie. How could I disobey my loving mother ?"

The boy's reply shook the chief robber and he said to himself, "This simple little boy has so much regard for his mother's order. I am a grown up man and with all my senses and wisdom I am plundering the caravans and disobeying Allaah the Great and the blessed Nabi ρ. He and his companions felt so much ashamed of themselves that they gave up the robbing and prayed for forgiveness from Allaah for their wicked ways. They also returned the looted goods to the travellers in the caravan and decided to change their lives entirely for the better.

Dear children! See how good deeds affect others and make them do good as well.

If we ever go home and say that we did not get any homework and then go to school saying that we could not do any homework because there were problems at home, we may get away for a awhile but as soon as our parents happen to meet the teacher, the truth will come out and we will be embarrassed. We will then always be mistrusted.

The person who always speaks the truth will save himself from many evils and sins and thereby have goodness and respect in this world and the Aakhirah.

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Story Twenty-Five

What Answer will I Give to Allaah?

Hadhrat Umar τ was the second Khalifah of Islaam and ruled half the world. Even the emperors of Rome and Persia shivered when they heard his name. His son Abdullaah τ was once travelling somewhere when he became very hungry. There were no restaurants during those days, so when he saw a shepherd with some goats, he thought that he should ask him for some milk to stop the hunger.

"Could you please give me a cup of milk to drink so that my hunger could stop?" he asked the shepherd. "I don't mind giving you some, but the goats do not belong to me and I have no permission to give you any."

Now Hadhrat Abdullaah τ was taught by his father, who saw to it that all the Muslims of the Muslim empire were practising on the Deen. He taught his son very well and also taught him wisdom. Hadhrat Abdullaah τ decided to test the shepherd, so he said, "If you listen to something I have to say, you will benefit very greatly." "What is it?" the shepherd asked.

Hadhrat Abdullaah τ then explained, "I shall buy one goat from you and give you the money. I shall then have milk to drink and when I wish, I can also slaughter it and have meat. You will then have some money for yourself and if your master asks where the one goat has gone, you may tell him that a wolf ate it."

As soon as he suggested this, the shepherd asked, "Dear man! Then where is Allaah? Where is Allaah?" Hadhrat Abdullaah τ was very happy to hear this and told the shepherd, "As long as there are people like you on earth, there will always be good and success coming to the Ummah."

It is the concerns for the Aakhirah that makes a person alone in a forest realise that Allaah is watching and that he will have to answer to Allaah for all his actions. Even though some benefit is received in this world, the fact is that it will all be lost in the Aakhirah.

LESSON: Dear children! This story teaches us to be aware of Allaah at all times and that we must never spoil out Aakhirah for a little benefit in this world. We must never use anyone's thing without his permission.

Today many boys ring people's doorbells and run away, they steal fruit from people's trees and take things from shops without paying for it. We must never be like them and always remember that Allaah is watching. In this way, we will be able to stay away from all sins. We must also recite the following du'aa:

اَللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي أَخْشَاكَ كَأَنِّي أَرَاكَ

"O Allaah! Make me one who fears You as if I am seeing You."

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A Story of Allaah's Greatness

Dear children! Remember that when a person's heart is filled with love for Allaah, Allaah allows the person to do things that nations put together cannot achieve. In the seventh century after Hijrah, the Muslims became so negligent that the Tartars swept over them and captured their lands from them. In a single day, the Tartars killed a hundred and fifty thousand Muslims in Baghdad. In fact, the Muslims were so frightened of the Tartars that they used to say that if a person ever heard that the Tartars were defeated, they should never believe it.

Darband was a city that the Tartars once intended to attack. When the people of the city heard this, they left everything behind and ran away. It was only Khwaja Muhammad Darnadi رحمه الله who remained in the Masjid with his servant. When the Tartar prince and his soldiers entered the town, they were stunned to see how cowardly their enemy was to leave so much wealth and luxuries behind and flee.

The prince sent his men to see whether anyone at all was in the city. When they discovered that there were two men in the Masjid, the prince instructed that the two be captured and brought to him. The two were therefore brought before the prince in chains. Here are the words they exchanged:

The prince: Did you not know that we were coming to the city?
The Sheikh: We certainly did.

The prince: Then why did you not run away?
The Sheikh: We were sitting in Allaah's house.

The prince: Do you not know that we have swords and that we can have you tied up in chains?

The Sheikh: What can these chains do?

The prince: What do you mean?

The Sheikh: These chains can do nothing to us.

The prince: What?! None but us can free you from those chains.

The Sheikh: No one can free us?

Hadhrat Muhammad Darbandi رحمه الله then became angry and stood up saying, "Allaah!" With the name of Allaah, the chains snapped like old threads and the prince was terrified. He then told his men to free the Sheikh and to allow him to live in the city. The prince then started to take a liking to the Sheikh and used to visit him often. The prince eventually became a Muslim and because of this, other princes also became Muslims. In this manner, Allaah made the empire a Muslim empire.

LESSON: We learn that when fear for Allaah is in a person's heart, he knows well that nothing and no one else can benefit or harm him and therefore fears no one else. On the other hand, when a person does not fear Allaah, he has no peace at all in this world.

Dear children! We should also have this strong connection with Allaah and our actions must show that we think of Allaah. When a person listens to what his parents say and does not trouble his brothers and sisters at home, people know that he respects and loves his parents. Similarly, when we do things that please Allaah like respect and obey out parents and teachers, then too people will know that we love and fear Allaah.

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Look at the One Who Gives

Hadhrat Sheikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah رحمه الله writes the following story about himself. He says, "When I was a little boy, my parents gave me a beautiful little pillow like all children have. I loved it very much and always kept it with me. My father needed a pillow to lie down one day, so I gave him the pillow saying, 'Here Abbajee! You can use my pillow.' My father however gave me a slap saying, 'You are still calling it your pillow!?'

By this he meant that it was given to me to use and was never my own. Although I felt bad about the fact that I was giving it with sincerity and received a slap, I now realise what an important lesson my father was teaching me (may Allaah have mercy on him). My way of thinking has thus changed."[1]

We learn from this that when our parents give us something to use, we must use it on out brothers, sisters and others as well. For example, when we get a chocolate or some sweets, we should share it with others as well.

NOTE: Parents must remember never to hand over anything to their children, but give them to use it, while still retaining ownership over it. In this way, others can also use it. If given over to little children, the thing cannot be used even with their permission.

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[1] *Islaahi Khutubaat* Vol.4.

Story Twenty-Eight

Everything in this World will Come to an End

A Muslim ruler named Mahdi once had a magnificent palace built. He the said, “No one will be prevented from looking at it because whoever comes will either be a friend or an enemy. If he is a friend, then he will be pleased and we want our friends to be pleased. If he is an enemy, his heart will burn and he will be saddened and every person wants this for his enemy. Furthermore, he may look for and point out some fault, which we will be able to correct.

Just then, a pious man said, “The palace has two major faults (which you cannot correct). One is that you will never live in it forever and the other is that it will never last forever.” The ruler was so affected by this remark that he immediately gave the palace over to be used for poor people.

LESSON: We learn that we must never be too impressed by homes and buildings because they will all come to an end one day. We must also never forget Allaah when enjoying these things. When we do not have something, we must never nag our parents to have it because we must remember that it all comes to an end. We should rather be grateful for what we have and use it to please Allaah.

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Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: Which large animal did the two little frogs see?
Question 2: What is Darband?
Question 3: What reply did the shepherd give to the suggestion of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ?
Question 4: What gift did Hadhrat Sheikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah رحمه الله's father give him?
Question 5: What two faults did the pious person find in the palace?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 31: Which Sahabi τ is most famously known for obeying his mother?
Question 32: Which Sahabi τ had the loudest voice and it is said that his voice reached a distance of eight miles?
Question 33: Which Sahabi τ looked most like Rasulullaah ρ?
Question 34: Which Sahabi τ invited Rasulullaah ρ for a meal during the Battle of Khandaq?
Question 35: Who was the Sahabi τ in whose form Hadhrat Jibra'eel υ sometimes came to Rasulullaah ρ?
Question 36: Which Sahabi τ recited Istighfaar twelve thousand times every day?
Question 37: Which Sahabi τ used to recite the entire Qur'aan in a single Rakaah of salaah?
Question 38: The footsteps of which Sahabi τ did Rasulullaah ρ hear when he went on Mi'raaj?
Question 39: Which Sahabi τ gave Rasulullaah ρ the idea of digging a trench for the Battle of Khandaq?
Question 40: Which Sahabi τ first presented the idea of the Adhaan?

Salaah is a Small Islaam

This means that there is a bit of every other type of Ibaadah in salaah. We can see the importance of salaah when we realise that whereas all other forms of Ibaadah were made Fardh on earth, Rasulullaah ρ was called to the heavens when salaah was made Fardh. Those forms of Ibaadah that are found in salaah are:

1. Fasting: Just as a person does not eat or drink when fasting, he also does not eat or drink when performing salaah.
2. Zakaah: By paying zakaah, love for the world leaves the heart and Halaal wealth become pure. For salaah, the body, clothing and place of salaah have to be made pure.
3. Hajj: Just as people have to go to the Kabah for Hajj, they all have to face the Kabah in salaah.
4. Qurbaani: Just as people sacrifice animals on Eidul Adhaa, they sacrifice the honour of their foreheads in salaah by placing it on the ground in front of Allaah.
5. I'tikaaf: Just as people remain in the Masjid during I'tikaaf and stop themselves from going outside the Masjid, they also remain in one place when performing salaah an do not move around.

In the salaah that the best of creation has received, we find the collective acts of worship of all the other creation.

1. Just like the angels:

    - Just as the angels recite Durood for Rasulullaah ρ, we also recite Durood after the Tashahhud in salaah
    - Just as the angels recite Tasbeeh for Allaah and praise Him, we also recite Surah Faatiha in salaah and recite the Tasbeeh in Ruku and Sajdah
    - Just as the angels make du'aa for the people on earth, we give them du'aas of peace when we make the Salaam at the end of the salaah
    - Just as the angels make Ruku and Sajdah, so do we
    - Just as many angels are standing before Allaah all the time, we also stand in Qiyaam in salaah

2. Just like the trees in Qiyaam: Just as the trees are standing straight up all the time, we also stand in Qiyaam in salaah
3. Just like the mountains in Tashahhud: Just as the mountains are sitting down all the time, we also sit in Tashahhud in salaah
4. Just like the animals in Ruku: Just as the animals are bowing all the time on four legs, we too bow in Ruku in salaah
5. Just like the fish and reptiles in Sajdah: Just as the fish and reptiles are in a lying down position all the time, we too lie down in Sajdah in salaah.

We therefore see that just as man is the best of creation, his Ibaadah is also the best because it includes the Ibaadah of all the other creation.

So tired!

"I was so tired after coming home from the office that I slept with my shoes on," one friend told another.

"That is not tiredness," his friend said, "I was so tired when I got home that I put my walking stick to bed and slept all night standing behind the door until the Fajr Adhaan woke me up."

Shaahid: Come on in inside Haamid. Let us talk. Tell me. Where are the Himalayas?
Haamid: I have no idea.
Shaahid: you do not even know that. Then go stand outside rather.
Haamid: Why? Will I see them there?

Story Twenty-Nine

A King and A Fly

Allaah has created everything for a purpose and there is nothing that has no specific role to play in the world. Nothing that Allaah created is bad because everything has a purpose that is good for the functioning of the universe. In fact, even harmful animals and reptiles have a purpose to serve. It is only because of our lack of understanding that we may not understand what the purpose is.

There was a king who was sitting in his court with all splendour and pride. A fly came to sit on his nose and he waved it off. The fly was however stubborn and as many times as the king chased it away, it came back each time. The king finally said, "I don't know why Allaah has created this fly because it gives only trouble!"

A pious man sitting in the court remarked, "But it does have a purpose to serve. Allaah has created it to correct the crooked thinking of tyrants like you. It is there to teach you that despite what you think, you do not even have the ability to stop a fly from troubling you."

LESSON: The first thing we learn from this is that we should never underestimate the value of anything because everything has importance. The second thing we learn is that we must never have pride because Allaah does not like it at all and will punish a person for it. We must also never complain about the creation of anything because this is actually objecting to what Allaah has created. Similarly, we must also never tease anyone for being fat, short, thin, etc.

Dear children! We must be careful never to joke about any person's colour, eyes, nose, etc or about the weather being too hot, too cold or rainy. Allaah does not like these complaints, so we must be very careful about how we speak.

Story Thirty

Allaah's Wisdom

Imaam Raazi رحمه الله was a famous saint who wrote a famous Tafseer called *Tafseer Kabeer*. Just the explanation of Surah Faatiha takes two hundred pages. Nevertheless, in the explanation of the verse ***"All praise belongs to Allaah the Rabb of the universe"***, he writes a story that we will relate here. It is about a saint from Baghdad. The saint himself says:

" I went out for a walk one day and as I walked along the bank of the Tigris River, I noticed a scorpion walking ahead of me. I though to myself that Allaah must have created this scorpion for some reason and I wondered where it was off to, just then. Since I had the time, I decided to follow it to see where it was headed.

As I walked behind it, the scorpion turned towards the water and waited by the side. I also waited with it to see what I would do next. Just then, a turtle swam to the shore beside the scorpion and the scorpion quickly jumped on its back. Allaah had sent a ferry for the scorpion and it proceeded across the river. I hastily hired a boat and followed the odd pair across the river, where the scorpion jumped off. The scorpion then hurried over to a man whom I saw sleeping beneath a tree.

I was about to warn the man of the danger, when I saw a poisonous snake near the man's head, poised to bite him. However, just before the snake could bite the man, the scorpion jumped at the snake and stung it forcefully. The snake rolled over and died. The scorpion then proceeded to leave just as the man woke up. Seeing the scorpion running away, the man grabbed a rock to kill it, but I stopped him saying, "That scorpion just saved your life. Look at the dead snake beside you. It was that scorpion who killed the snake just before it could bite you."

From that day my eyes opened and I realised how great the wisdom of Allaah is to bring the scorpion all the ways across the river to save the man's life. There is therefore nothing in the world that has mot been created for a purpose.

Dear children! We must therefore never complain about why Allaah did not give us something or make us like someone. We must also never say things like, “Why is it raining today?” “Why is there so much lightning today?”, etc. Saying this will make Allaah angry. We must be happy with what Allaah gave us in every condition. Every Muslim must also always make the du’aa:

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ

All praise belongs to Allaah in every condition

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Story Thirty-One

Blessings in Sustenance

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak رحمه الله had plenty wealth in this world, but his heart remained free of any love for it. He was blessed with the special quality that saints speak about when they say, "Wealth should remain in the hand and never enter the heart."

When he was living in Khurasaan, he decided to go for Hajj. The people of the town sent a group of people to him with the request, "We have heard that you intend going for Hajj, so, if you permit, we would like to join you to benefit from your company."

"That will be fine," Hadhrat Abdullaah رحمه الله said, "but I would like you all to leave your monies with me so that I may spend for us all." The people readily agreed and he took all their bags of money and placed it in a box. He then saw to all the expenses of the journey as they travelled.

After completing the Hajj, when they reached Madinah, he asked them what their families at home had asked them to buy from Madinah. They told him what it was and he took them all to the marketplace to buy whatever they wanted. Thereafter, he took them back to Makkah and again asked them what their families at home had asked them to buy from there. They told him what it was and he took them all to the marketplace to buy whatever they wanted.

After this, they returned home to Khurasaan, where he invited them all for a meal. After the meal, he gave them all gifts and them opened up the box and gave each one of them their bags of money back.

LESSON: This story teaches us that every person should spend the wealth Allaah gave him in doing good according to his means. In this way, Allaah will give him blessings in his wealth. He must of course, make sure that he does not spend the money in the wrong places.

Dear friends! We must also make the intention that when we grow up, we will spend out Halaal wealth on other deserving people and in good causes together with spending on our families. When we teach beneficial knowledge to others and spend time telling our brothers and sisters good things, we will also be regarded as generous people and

our names will appear in the list of people who spend the favours Allaah gives them on others.

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Story Thirty-Two

The Highest Level of Imaan

Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ relates that someone once asked Rasulullaah ρ what the highest level of Imaan was (and with which actions can it be reached). Rasulullaah ρ told him that it will be reached when a person loves others for the sake of Allaah and dislikes them for the sake of Allaah (meaning that one makes friends and enemies only to please Allaah). The second thing Rasulullaah ρ mentioned was that a person uses his tongue for the Dhikr of Allaah.

Hadhrat Mu'aadh τ then asked Rasulullaah ρ to mention more such actions. Rasulullaah ρ said that another such action is to like for others what you like for yourself and to dislike for others what you dislike for yourself.[1]

Dear children! We must also make an effort to make our hearts such that we want only good for everyone. Instead of telling our brothers and sisters useless jokes and stories, we should rather say *Allaahu Akbar* or *Subhaanallaah* or some other Dhikr. Just as we like our school bag and books to be clean and neat, we must not damage the bags and books of others and when we borrow something from anyone, we must make sure that we look after it and return it just as it was when they lent it to us.

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[1] Musnad Ahmad.

Story Thirty-Three

Eating a Morsel of Food that has Fallen down

Hadhrat Hudhayfah bin Yamaan τ was a Sahabi who gave his life for the Rasulullaah ρ and was also one to whom Rasulullaah ρ told his secrets. He was therefore famously known as Rasulullaah ρ's secret carrier.

Iran was a superpower at the time and their way of life was famous all over the world at the time. Although the Romans were also a superpower during those times, the people of Iran were famously known for their cleanliness.

It was at the time when the Muslim army was about to attack the Iranian army that the Iranians invited the Muslims to talks. Amongst the group that went for the talks was Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ. When they arrived, the Iranians had some food prepared for them to eat, so the Muslims sat down to eat. As they were eating, a morsel of food slipped from Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ's hand and fell down. Now the teaching of Rasulullaah ρ is that when this happens, a person should pick up the food and eat it because he never knows in which morsel the blessings of the food is found. As he bent down to pick it up, another Sahabi τ knocked his elbow to ask him what he was doing because he was not to do that in the presence of the Iranians who would think that it was a dirty thing to do. The other Sahabi τ felt that the Iranians would think that the Muslims are ill mannered people who do not know how to eat or people who do not have such good food, because of which they wish to pick it up. He was therefore telling Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ to leave the food for once.

Now listen to the unique reply Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ gave him. He said, "Should I leave out the Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ for the sake of these fools?"

He did not care what the Iranians thought about his action, whether they would laugh, mock or feel bad about it. He could not leave out the Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ and therefore picked up the morsel, cleaned it and ate it.

LESSON: Allaah has placed plenty of blessings in the Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ and we should therefore never leave them out. We must

be convinced about the fact that by practising on the Sunnah, our heads will remain high in this world and together with success in the Aakhirah, we will never suffer disgrace in this world. In addition to this, we must also make du’aa to Allaah to give us the ability to practise on all of Rasulullaah ρ’s Sunnahs.

We must make the intention to always wash our hands before eating, to eat and drink with the right hand, to begin with *Bismillaah*, to sit and eat and to learn the du’aas for every occasion. We must also teach these to others and always practise on the Sunnah no matter how embarrassing it may seem.

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See my Swords and my Arms

When Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ and Hadhrat Rib'ee bin Aamir τ went to attend the talks with the Iranians and were entering the palace, Hadhrat Rib'ee τ was still wearing his old clothing, which may also have been untidy after a long journey.

When he reached the gates of the palace, the doormen stopped him saying, "You cannot go an see our king looking like that!" They then gave Hadhrat Rib'ee τ a long garment to wear. To this, Hadhrat Rib'ee τ said, "If I have to wear that to see your king, then I would rather not go and if I have to go, then I will go in my own clothing. If he does not wish to see me in these clothes, then I do not wish to see him either. I shall then rather go back."

The doorman then sent a message saying that strange people have arrived who do not want to wear our clothing to enter. As he waited, Hadhrat Rib'ee τ started to mend the strips of cloth that covered the broken parts of his sword. Looking at the sword, the doorman said, "May I have a look at that sword?" when Hadhrat Rib'ee τ handed it over to him, the doorman laughed, "Are you going to conquer Iran with that?" Hadhrat Rib'ee τ then said, "You have only seen the sword but have not seen the arm that uses the sword."

"Then show me your arm," the doorman said. "If you want to see my arm," Hadhrat Rib'ee τ said, "you must fetch the strongest shield you have." The doorman then brought an iron shield that they knew could never be damaged by a sword. "Now bring someone to hold it," Hadhrat Rib'ee τ said. When one of the soldiers held the shield, Hadhrat Rib'ee τ struck it so forcefully with his sword that it broke into two pieces.

The soldiers watching were stunned and sent a message inside the palace that such strange people have come who break shields in half with their swords.

It was the custom of the Iranians that the king usually sat on a throne while everyone else stood. However, when Hadhrat Rib'ee τ arrived, he said, "We do what our Nabi ρ taught us and amongst his teachings was

that one person cannot be sitting while the others stood and spoke. Either you have chairs for us as well or you stand like the rest of us." This made the king furious and he gave the command that Hadhrat Rib'ee τ be sent away with a pot of sand on his head. Hadhrat Rib'ee τ took the sand and put it on his head. As he left, he said to the king, "You have already given us the sand of your territory."

Now the Iranians were very superstitious people and every little statement worried them. They therefore thought is a terrible thing that they had given their land away to the Muslims. The king therefore set someone to get the pot back. How could he get it back from someone like Hadhrat Rib'ee bin Aamir τ? Hadhrat Rib'ee τ got away with the sand because Allaah had already decided that the Muslims should capture the land of the Iranians.

LESSON: The person who believes that Allaah is the Most Powerful and has power over all things will never fear anything else. He knows well that none can do him any harm because everything in the skies and earth are in Allaah's control.

Dear children! We must never be afraid if we hear about the military power of the non–Muslims or of any of their achievements because we must remember that both their lives and our lives are all in Allaah's control. In fact, Allaah will put fear in their hearts if we remain firm on the Sunnahs of Rasulullaah ρ.

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The Story of Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله

When Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله attacked Sindh, he was only seventeen years old. Usually children at that age cannot even run a house properly, let alone an army. He was however the commander of the Muslim army that came to attack the powerful army of Rajah Daahir.

The armies of Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله and Rajah Daahir met on a vast battlefield and after a hard fight, the army of Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله defeated the enemy on the strength of their Imaan. It is written in the books of history that when some thugs from Rajah Daahir's men looted a caravan of Muslim women, one of the women called out saying, "Help us! Help us!" When he heard this, Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله said, "I am at your service, sister! I am at your service, sister!" It was therefore in reply to this call that Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله led the Muslim army against Rajah Daahir.

After defeating Rajah Daahir, Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله did not stop but marched forward up to Multaan to make sure that Islaam reached there as well.

LESSON: Dear children! If even a bit of Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله 's fervour comes into us, no power in the world will be able to give us dirty looks. It is necessary that we also have the desire to strive for Deen like they did. We must therefore also make the intention that we want to make an effort for Deen. We must learn and teach the various du'aas, care for our health, remember Allaah and carry out all the acts of Ibaadah so that we become fighters for the Deen.

Instead of listening to stories about bears and monkeys from our parents at night, we should rather ask to hear stories about the brave Sahabah ψ and about what sacrifices they gave for the sake of this Deen. Instead of learning the names of players of various sports, we should rather learn the names of the Sahabah ψ and their swords and the names of people who completed the entire Qur'aan in a single Rakaah of salaah.

Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: On whose nose did the fly sit?
Question 2: What is the name of Imaam Raazi رحمه الله's famous tafseer?
Question 3: Which saint's story appears in the incident titled "Blessings in Sustenance"?
Question 4: Which Sahabi τ was known as Rasulullaah ρ's secret carrier?
Question 5: What did Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ say when someone stopped him from picking up the morsel?
Question 6: What was the age of Muhammad bin Qaasim رحمه الله when he attacked Sindh?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 41: After Hadhrat Loot υ and his wife, who was the second couple to make Hijrah for the Deen of Allaah?
Question 42: The land of which two Sahabah ψ was bought to build the Masjidun Nabawi?
Question 43: Which daughter of Rasulullaah ρ will be the leader of the women of Jannah?
Question 44: Who will be the leader of the youngsters of Jannah?
Question 45: Who will be the leader of the martyrs in Jannah?
Question 46: Who will be the leader of the middle-aged people of Jannah?
Question 47: Rasulullaah ρ was the father-in-law of which two Sahabah ψ?
Question 48: Rasulullaah ρ was the son-in-law of which two Sahabah ψ?
Question 49: Which Surah of the Qur'aan is called the heart of the Qur'aan?
Question 50: Which Surah of the Qur'aan is called the beauty of the Qur'aan?

The Du'aa for Coming Out of the Toilet

غُفْرانَكَ أَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنِّ الْأَذٰى و عَافَانِي

I ask your forgiveness, O Allaah! All praise belongs to Allaah Who has removed difficulty from me and granted me comfort.

Cunning

One fool to another: I am shining this torch to the sky. Go and climb up to the sky on its light.

Other fool: You are very cunning. I know that when I am halfway up, you will switch the torch off so that I fall.

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Story Thirty-Six

The Carnival of Life

"Aasif! Aasif!" Khaalid called out as he got off his bicycle, "Are you not coming out for the trip?" "Dear friend," Aasif said sadly, "I would love to come, but I have no money." Aasif said this as he was returning from tuition with books in his hand. Looking at Aasif carefully, Khaalid said, "Does that mean that you will not be coming?" "I'm afraid it does, my friend," Aasif said in a low voice.

"There is no reason to be so down. Just ask your father for some money," Khaalid said to him. "But you know what happened," Aasif explained, "Because my marks were low during the last examination, my father stopped my spending and I have now no money."

"It is sad that your spending had to be stopped for such a thing," Khlaaid said. They two stood there in silence for awhile and then Khaalid suddenly said, "I know how you can make some money!" "How?" Aasif asked.

Khaalid then whispered to Aasif as he said, "Do you know where your father keeps his wallet?" "Of course I do. In his pocket." Aasif replied, "But why are you asking?" Khaalid smiled as he said, "Because I want to take you for the trip. Don't be so simple. What I mean is that you should take some money out of his wallet sometimes. Then we can both enjoy ourselves and you can later apologise to your father and ask for forgiveness."

Aasif shook his head as he said, "No! No! That is stealing and I shall not do it." "Look here," Khaalid said, "I was just trying to help you get some money so that you can come on the trip. You may of course do as you please. If you do not want to walk on the seashore, enjoy the sights and eat hot burgers, then it is up to you. Anyway, As Salaamu Alaykum. I am going home."

Aasif gave no reply and as Khaalid rode off on his bicycle, he turned his head around and shouted, "If you understood what I said, you will definitely do as I said. I shall wait for you tomorrow evening." He then rode away until he was out of sight.

Aasif's mind was in turmoil as he returned home. While he knew that it was wrong to steal, he so much wanted to go on the trip. The good and evil thoughts fought each other until eventually the good won. Honesty won the day for him.

He then told his parents everything that Khaalid had told him and cried as he said, "Father! I know I was bad, so please forgive me. I shall never keep friends like this again. From today, I shall cut off all friendship I have with him."

"I am very glad that you have told us everything and you realise who is a good friend and who is not," his father said. His father then placed his hands on Aasif's shoulders and said, "This life is like a carnival where good and bad are always fighting each other. While some people support the good, there are those who support the evil. Just like a carnival, people tend to get too attracted to all the entertainment and then they forget Allaah. Such people then start to support the evil. However, those who exercise patience and are steadfast, they manage to stay away from the evil and save others as well. Such people support the good and are the lamps of honesty."

When his father stopped talking, Aasif said with a firm resolve, "I support the good and every step of my way in this carnival of life, I shall stay away from evil and keep others away as well. I shall be a lamp for the truth and honesty. Father, I shall save others from the wrong path, others like … Khaalid … and other people."

LESSON: One must never look only at temporary pleasures, but think of the end result. Look at how Allaah can become displeased if we do wrong and it will be a cause of embarrassment and grief for me later. We must also remember that the people who wish the best for us in this world are our parents. If we want something, we must make du'aa to Allaah and then ask our parents. If they see benefit in us having it, they will certainly get it for us if they are able to.

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Story Thirty-Seven

Who is the Most Foolish

There was a pious saint who lived a very long time ago by the name of Bahlool رحمه الله. He was one of those people who remembered Allaah very much and because he used to say many wise things, people also called him Balool Hakeem (the wise). He lived during the time of the Khalifah Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله and he often joked with the Khalifah. Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله always told his guards never to stop Bahlool رحمه الله whenever he wished to see the Khalifah.

Bahlool رحمه الله was once with Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله when the Khalifah gave him a walking stick saying, "I am giving you this as a trust and I want you to give it to the person whom you find to be more foolish than yourself." He meant that Bahlool رحمه الله was the most foolish person he met.

Bahlool رحمه الله kept the stick with his and it was after a year that Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله fell very ill. Despite all efforts to cure him, his health did not improve. He was eventually confined to bed and not allowed to go anywhere. It was during this time that Bahlool رحمه الله came to visit him. their conversation was as follows:

Bahlool رحمه الله: How are you feeling, O Ameerul Mu'mineen?

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: What can I say, O Bahlool. There is a very long journey ahead.

Bahlool رحمه الله: Where are you journeying to, O Ameerul Mu'mineen?

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: To the Aakhirah.

Bahlool رحمه الله: I see. How many troops have you sent ahead? How much supplies|? How many tents?

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: What are you talking about? This is a journey for which there are no tents, and a person does not have any troops or any bodyguards.

Bahlool رحمه الله: I see. When will you be returning?

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: You have again started to talk nonsense. The journey is to the Aakhirah, from which there is no return.

Bahlool رحمه الله: I see. You mean that the journey is a very long one for which you can send no one ahead?

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: That's right.

Bahlool رحمه الله: Then, O Ameerul Mu'mineen, you have given me a trust to keep and I have had it for very long. You told me to give it to someone more foolish than myself and today I have found such a person. I have found none more deserving of it than yourself because when you usually go on short journeys from which you expect to return in a short while, you make sure that you send many troops ahead to prepare the road and the stops. However, now that you are undertaking a journey that is so long and from which you shall never return, it seems like you have made no prior arrangements. That walking stick is for someone just like you.

Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله: Bahlool! I have always taken you to be a fool, but have today realised that there is perhaps none as intelligent as you.

Dear children! The intelligent person is the one who prepares for the Aakhirah because any loss there is a great loss. Such a person leaves all sins, obeys Allaah, asks for forgiveness very often, remembers death, regards every day as his last and before doing any act, he first bears in mind that he is heading for Jannah and steering clear of Jahannam. We should also remember that just as our teachers punish us for not doing homework or as out parents punish us for not doing something, in the same way Allaah will also question us about what we did in this world. We will then be rewarded with Jannah or punished in Jahannam.

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Story Thirty-Eight

Always be Truthful

Hajjaaj was delivering a sermon one day and took very long to complete. Someone stood up and said to him, "Perform the salaah, Hajjaaj because time waits for no one and you will have no excuse to offer before Allaah." Hajjaaj immediately had the man imprisoned.

The family of the man later went to Hajjaaj and asked him to release the man because he was insane. "I shall release him if he admits to being insane," Hajjaaj said. Hajjaaj then sent for the man and asked him whether he was insane. The man truthfully replied, "Allaah forbid! I can never say that Allaah has afflicted me with such an illness when He has given me perfect health." Because of his honesty, Hajjaaj released the man.

Dear children! It is because of this that our elders say that we should always speak the truth even if we are threatened with being burnt. We must always strive to please Allaah because the most foolish person is the one who pleases others while displeasing Allaah.

Dear children! Allaah has placed a person's success in the truth. We should therefore always speak the truth to be successful in this world and in the Aakhirah.

Because the man in the story did not show ingratitude to Allaah, Allaah gave him honour and placed compassion in the heart of Hajjaaj. If we obey all Allaah's commands, Allaah will place love for us into the hearts of our parents, teachers and others. In fact, Allaah will also make all the other creations love us as well.

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Story Thirty-Nine

The Fruits of Effort

As soon as Asad entered the house, he threw his bag aside, dropped down on the sofa and started to cry. "What is the matter?" his mother asked.

"I cannot study. I just cannot study and I shall not be going to school from tomorrow," Asad replied. "But why?" his mother asked, "How will you grow up if you do not learn." Asad muttered something to himself as he went to the next room.

Asad was a very pleasant boy and everyone liked him very much. He showed great respect to his elders and had very good qualities. The only weakness he had was that he could never remember anything he learnt. For this reason, he always ended up with low marks in his tests.

At supper that night, Asad was still worried. "Why are you so worried?" his mother asked, "What is the matter?"

"The problem is not that I do not want to study. It is that despite all my efforts at learning, I keep forgetting the work when I write the test and never do well."

"Listen, dear," his mother said with affection, "It is people who do not make an effort who are unsuccessful. If you forget something once, lean it again but never give up. If you keep trying, you will soon succeed. Failure is the staircase to success and as much as you fail, you just have to keep trying. You will reach your destination only by taking the next step forward."

As his mother kept encouraging him on, Asad spoke and said, "Thank you Mom for the encouragement. Instead of losing hope, I shall keep my courage up and never give up hope. Inshaa Allaah, I shall be successful."

Thereafter, whenever Asad received homework or whenever a test was coming up, he recited Qur'aan. Made du'aa and, together with the five Fardh salaah, he made sure that he also performed Salaatul Haajah to ask Allaah for help.

His parents were happy to know that with the excuse of his eagerness to succeed, their son was becoming regular with his salaah, *Tilaawat* and du'aa, which are the true elements of success because the purpose of a Mu'min is the Aakhirah.

Thereafter, Asad always came out first or second in every grade he passed. He once told his mother, "I want to become a pilot so that when the Kuffaar fight the Muslims, I can fight them and Inshaa Allaah become a *Shaheed*. In this way, my Aakhirah can be a successful and shining one."

Asad made a great effort to study to be a pilot and passed through all the difficult stages of the course. He eventually succeeded in the interviews and even received an award from the government for outstanding achievement in his field. Asad was therefore not discouraged by his failures and never gave up hope because he realised that when a person really wants something, asks Allaah for it and then makes an effort towards it, Allaah gives it to him.

Dear children! We must also take courage and keep asking Allaah for what we wish to achieve. We must also ask advice from our elders before going further because they have the experience to be able to tell us what would be right for us and what not. With their advice, we must make an effort and keep asking for Allaah's help. In this way we can be successful both in this world and in the Aakhirah.

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Story Forty

Friendship

Zaahid and Haamid were two friends. They both belonged to middle-class families and were very close. They both attended the tenth grade in school, played together and studied together. Their fathers also worked in the same office and were also very close friends. People always spoke about their deep friendship and they were always happy. However, an incident followed that shook everyone.

Zaahid's father was involved in a very serious accident and was very severely injured. Despite receiving emergency treatment, he met his Creator the same night (he passed away). This left everyone deeply shocked and the family was left without anyone to support them because Zaahid was still too young to start work.

It was during those days that a new boy called Raaheel arrived at the school. He did not like the deep friendship between the two and was always trying to break their friendship. Not long thereafter, the time came for school fees to be collected and a notice was placed on the noticeboard. When Zaahid saw this, his heart sank and he started to worry about where he would get the money to pay. The little sewing his mother did for people only managed to pay for the household expenses. When he eventually told his mother about it, she decided to sell her sewing machine to pay the fees.

Raaheel saw his chance to do what he was always planning when the day arrived to collect the fees. He quietly stole Haamid's fees and put it into Zaahid's bag. What he did not realise was that the class monitor had seen him. The monitor then secretly put the fees into Raaheel's bag.

When Sir Naweed called the boys to pay their fees, Haamid could not find his money. When he told the teacher about it, Sir Naweed immediately had all the boy's bags checked. Raaheel's heart was almost bursting with joy. However when nothing was found in Zaahid's bag, Raaheel became pale. When the feeds were eventually found in his bag, the monitor told the story to the teacher and Raaheel was most embarrassed. He was then expelled from the school.

Look dear children! As it happened to Raaheel, the person who digs a hole for others to fall into always falls inside himself. Haamid was actually more worried than Zaahid because he had brought fees for Zaahid as well, because of which his mother did not need to sell her sewing machine. She was therefore able to continue earning for the family.

LESSON: When a person does something to assist others for the sake of Allaah, Allaah never lets the effort go to waste. The result is always found even though others may place obstacles in the path.

When a person maintains friendship for the sake pf Allaah, Allaah gets happy and the angels speak highly of him. He becomes famous in the heavens and even receives the du'aa of the people on earth.

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Story Forty-One

The Rewards in this World for those who Serve their Parents

There was a man who served his parents very well until they passed away. After their death, he saw someone in a dream telling him, "Because you served your parents well, you will be rewarded." The person then told him to go to a certain rock, under which he will find a hundred gold coins. He asked the person whether there will be any *Barakah* in the coin. When the person told him that there would not be any, he said that he would then not take the coins.

When he told his wife about the dream the next morning, she said, "It is better for you not to take it. However, just go and have a look to see if it is there." "Not at all," he said, "If I am not taking it, I shall not go see."

The following night he again saw the person telling him that if he did not want the hundred coins, he should go and collect ten gold coins from under the rock. He again asked if there would be *Barakah* in the coins, but the person again said that there will be no *Barakah* in the coins. He therefore paid no attention to the instruction.

When he again told his wife, she said, "You missed out on a hundred coins, now go and grab the ten." "No," he said, "If there is no *Barakah* in it, I would rather not have it."

On the third night, he saw the person again, telling him that he should collect one coin from under the rock. This time the person said that the coin will have *Barakah*. Consequently, he collected the coin, with which he bought a fish. As his wife was cutting the fish, she found a valuable gem in the fish's stomach. When he sold the gem in the marketplace, he received enough money to last him a lifetime. This is what is called *Barakah.*

The word *Barakah* cannot be found in the English dictionary, because of which Western people do not know what *Barakah* is. It is for this reason that they are never at ease. *Alhamdu Lillaah*, it is in the lives of the people of Imaan. Allaah says: ***"If the people of the lands have***

Imaan and fear Allaah, We will open up to them the Barakah of the skies and the earth."

LESSON: Looking after our parents is Fardh (obligatory) for us because they looked after us when we were young. Because they underwent many hardships to make life easy for us, it is only right that we serve them when they are old.

Another lesson we learn from the story is that we must be patient and never rush to do things. When the man did not rush to get the hundred coins, Allaah gave him something much better.

The third lesson we learn is that we must always make du'aa for *Barakah* in our wealth because if there is no *Barakah*, we can have all the money in the world but it will not benefit us much and we will still never have peace of mind. If we have *Barakah* in our wealth, it may be a little bit, but Allaah will grant us peace of mind with it.

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Story Forty-Two

“That is a Crow, my son”

A man had become very old. He had given his son the best of education and given him all he could. He was one day sitting outside with his son when a crow perched on the wall. “Son,” the father said, “What is that?” “That is a crow, father,” the son replied.

After a short while, the father again asked, “Son! What is that?” “That is a crow, father,” the son repeated. It was not long afterwards that the father again asked, “Son! What is that?” The son said, “I just told you that that is a crow, father.”

They sat still for awhile and again the father asked, “Son! What is that?” The son’s tone changed his time as he said, “That is a crow, father, a crow!”

Yet again, the father asked the son, “Son! What is that?” This time, the son could not contain himself. “That is a crow, father,” he shouted, “You keep asking the same question all the time and I have told you a thousand times that that is a crow. Don’t you understand me?”

A little while later, the father got up, went to his room and took out an old diary. He opened up one of the pages and handed the diary over to his sons saying, “Son, please read this.”

The son read: “Today my little boy was sitting in the yard when a crow arrived. He then asked me twenty five times, ‘Daddy! What is that?’ I then replied each one of the twenty-five times, ‘Son! That is as crow.’ Each time, I replied with great love and affection.”

The father then said, “Son, see the difference between a father and a son. While I replied twenty five times and even noted that it was with love and affection each time. Today you got angry when I asked you the same question just five times.”

See dear children! We forget the good that our parents did for us. We do not know how many times they have gone out of their way to do things for us. We must therefore make a pledge that we will never speak to them disrespectfully and that we will always speak to them in soft and affectionate voices.

Questions Pertaining to the Stories

Question 1: What did Bahlool رحمه الله say when he returned the walking stick to Haroon Ar Rasheed رحمه الله?

Question 2: What should we do when we experience difficulty in learning or in anything else?

Question 3: How did Zaahid help his friend Haamid?

Question 4: How many times in his childhood did the son ask his father "Father! What is this?"?

Question 5: What reward did Allaah give the person in this world for serving his parents?

Islaamic Quiz

Question 51: Which Nabi υ is known as the father of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام?

Question 52: Mention two famous names of Rasulullaah ρ?

Question 53: Who named Rasulullaah ρ Muhammad?

Question 54: Which land is referred to as the homeland of the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام?

Question 55: How many times is the name Muhammad mentioned in the Qur'aan?

Question 56: Which daughter of Rasulullaah ρ was injured while making Hijrah and later passed away because of the injury?

Question 57: Who used to be called Rasulullaah ρ's son?

Question 58: Which Sahabi τ was called "The sword of Allaah"?

Question 59: In which battle was Rasulullaah ρ's tooth lost?

Question 60: Which Nabi υ is called the second Aadam?

The Du'aa for Entering the Toilet

أَللّهُمَّ اِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْخُبُثِ وَ الْخَبَائِثِ

O Allaah! I seek your protection from the male and female Shayaateen

Quiz Answers

1. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ
2. Hadhrat Ali τ
3. Hadhrat Bilaal τ
4. Hadhrat Khadeeja رضي الله عنها
5. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ
6. Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ
7. Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit τ
8. Hadhrat Khabbaab bin Arat τ
9. Hadhrat Haarith τ
10. Hadhrat Sumayya رضي الله عنها
11. Hadhrat Uthmaan bin Madh'oon τ
12. Hadhrat Muhammad bin Haatib τ
13. Hadhrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas τ
14. Hadhrat Ali τ
15. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Zubayr τ
16. Hadhrat Nu'maan bin Basheer τ
17. Hadhrat Mus'ab bin Umayr τ
18. Hadhrat Ammaar bin Yaasir τ
19. Umayr bin Humaam
20. Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Haarith τ and Hadhrat Raafi bin Maalik τ
21. Hadhrat Miqdaad bin Aswad τ
22. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ and Hadhrat Ruqayya رضي الله عنها
23. Hadhrat Abu Dharr τ
24. Hadhrat Tameem Daari τ
25. Hadhrat Suhayb Roomi τ
26. Hadhrat Zaynab رضي الله عنها
27. Hadhrat Bilaal τ
28. Hadhrat Aa'isha رضي الله عنها
29. Hadhrat Khadeeja رضي الله عنها and Hadhrat Aa'isha رضي الله عنها
30. Hadhrat Abdullaah τ
31. Hadhrat Haaritha bin Nu'maan τ
32. Hadhrat Abbaas τ
33. Hadhrat Hasan bin Ali τ
34. Hadhrat Jaabir τ
35. Hadhrat Dihya Kalbi τ
36. Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah τ
37. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ

38. Hadhrat Bilaal τ
39. Hadhrat Salmaan Farsi τ
40. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Zaid bin Abdi Rabbihi τ
41. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ and Hadhrat Ruqayya رضي الله عنها
42. Hadhrat Sahal τ and Hadhrat Suhail τ
43. Hadhrat Faatima رضي الله عنها
44. Hadhrat Hasan τ and Hadhrat Husayn τ
45. Hadhrat Hamza τ
46. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ
47. Hadhrat Ali τ and Hadhrat Uthmaan τ
48. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ and Hadhrat Umar τ
49. Surah Yaaseen
50. Surah Rahmaan
51. Hadhrat Ibraheem υ
52. Muhammad ρ and Ahmad ρ
53. His grandfather Abdul Muttalib
54. Palestine
55. Thrice
56. Hadhrat Zaynab رضي الله عنها
57. Hadhrat Zaid bin Haaritha τ
58. Hadhrat Khaalid bin Waleed τ
59. The Battle of Uhud
60. Hadhrat Nooh υ

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